

Elis. THE *Short*
Holy Desires
OF
D E A T H.
OR A
COLLECTION

Of some Thoughts of the Fa-
thers of the Church, to shew
how Christians ought to despise
. Life, and to desire Death.

By the R.P. *Zaccharie*, Prior of
St. *Genouève*, and Chancellour of
the University of *Paris*.

Englified by *J. V.* at the In-
stance of a Person of Honour.

Printed in the Year, 1678.

*Qui
Perfectus
est,
Patienter
vivit,
Delectabiliter
moritur.*

**The Perfect Man,
Lives Patiently,
Dies Pleasantly.**

*St. Augustin in his Exposition
upon the 1 Epist. of St. John
Tract. 9.*

A N

ADVERTISEMENT.

THis Collection, entituled *The Holy Desires of Death*, was only in its beginning a Simple and Literal Translation of some Passages of the Fathers of the Church, which the Authour made in his continual Infirmities, for the Comfort of himself, and of some persons of Piety.

Afterwards, his Manuscript having been view'd by very Prudent and Illuminated persons, they judg'd that it ought to be published: but withall, that it was fit it should be first enlarged and explicated by a kind of Paraphrase upon some of the Conceptions of the Holy Fathers which are couched in this Work; thereby to render it usefull to more people by rendering it intelligible to all.

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You

You will therefore find in some places, that the Authour hath pick'd out only the Sense, and (as one may say) the Sap and the Juyce of the Doctrine of these great Saints, in explicating their Conceptions, and in adding to their Expressions; yet so as not to swerve from their Sentiments, nor stray from the Character of their Spirits.

It was also conceiv'd that, it might be permitted to support their Reasonings with the authority of the sacred Scripture: and as that is the source of all their Lights, to rely principally thereupon to strengthen this Work.

And this Liberality appeared to be so much the more tolerable, by how much it was sometimes even Necessary to render the Discourse more consequent, more connected, more forcible, and finally more capable to serve for the Edification of our Neighbour, which is the sole

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sole Intention we had, and which indeed one can justly have.

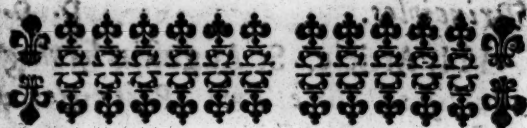
For the rest, it ought not to be taken amiss, if, among the divers Conceptions here collected from the Scriptures and from the Fathers, there are found some which resemble one another; since even that Resemblance hath also great Advantages. For besides that thereby it is made manifest, that these Conceptions are not particular Opinions, it is moreover a sensible Mark of the spirit of Truth which dictated them; and 'tis to be hoped that they who shall Read them in the same Spirit, will always derive from them some new Instructions.

We have plac'd St. *Augustin* in the first Rank of the Church Fathers whose Sentiments are here related, because we found his Discourses so effectual, that we believ'd we had reason to make them

the Foundation of this Work, and to style them by the Name of Principles; because in effect all that which ensues, whether out of the Name *St. Augustin*, or out of the other Fathers, relates to the first Maxims which we have drawn from him, as Consequences from their Principles.

It would have been very Natural, and certainly very profitable, to joyn in this Treatise the Example of the Holy Fathers to their Doctrine, but the Author having already traced the History of their holy Death in his *Book Of the Death of the Just*, you may thither have recourse.

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which

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of this Treatise, we have drawn from
St. Augustin such Principles as were
proper to establish this Proposition:
That perfect Souls desire Death,
and receive it with Joy. So we end
this Collection with a Discourse
which the same holy Doctor made
upon the same Subject, wherein he
pretends to engage all Men, by
their proper Interest, to desire to pass
forth of this World. P. 326.

To

To the devout Peruser of these Collections.

IF in the Mouth of two or three *Mat. 18.*
Witnesses every word is esta- *16.*
blished: You have here (devout Rea-
der) above six times that number of
irrefragable Testifiers of that Truth,
which is intended to be established in
this short Treatise, to wit, That
Christians ought to despise Life
and desire Death.

I. S. Augustin

Leads the Van, whose Principles
are the Basis of the following Build-
ing. He was one of the most famous
and learned Fathers of the Church,
and the renowned Bishop of Hippo in
Africa: where he flourished in admi-
rable Sanctity in year of our Redemp-
tion, 400. and died in the year, 435.

The Fathers who preceded and who
followed S. Augustin, deliver the same
Doctrin upon the same subject, to wit.

II. Tertullian.

Who flourished in the Year, 230.

III.

III. St. Cyprian.

The most Eloquent and holy Bishop of Carthage : who was crown'd with Martyrdom , in the Year, 250.

IV. St. Gregory.

Bishop of Nazian, surnam'd the Divine , the equal of St. Basil, and the Companion of his studies , who flourished in the Year, 370.

V. St. Basil.

Surnam'd the Great, Arch-Bishop of Cesarea in Cappadocia, who flourish'd at the same time, to wit, 370.

VI. St. Gregory.

Bishop of Nyce, the Brother of St. Basil, who flourish'd in the Year, 380.

VII. St. Ambrose.

Bishop of Milan, who died in the Year, 397.

VIII. St. John Chrysostom.

Bishop of Constantinople , who died about the Year, 407.

IX. St. Ireneus.

Bishop of Lyons in France, who suffered

suffered under Severus, in the Year, 180.

X. St. Jerome.

*Priest and Doctor of the Church,
who died in the Year, 420.*

XI. St. Isidor.

*Bishop of Sevil in Spain, who died
in the Year, 636.*

XII. St. Eucherius.

*Bishop of Lyons in France, who
died about the Year, 433.*

XIII. St. Fulgentius.

*Bishop of Ruspen in Africa, who
died in the Year, 529.*

XIV. St. Paulinus.

*Bishop of Nola, in Campania,
who died in the Year, 431.*

XV. St. Gregory.

*The first most holy Pope of that
Name, deservedly surnamed the
Great, who died in the Year, 604.*

XVI. St. John Climacus.

*A holy Abbot in Mount Sina,
who flourished in the Year, 560.*

XVII. St. Bernard.

*Abbot of Claraval, an Apostoli-
cal*

cal man of great Sanctity, who died
in the Year, 1153.

XVIII. The Authour
Of the Books of the Imitation of
Christ.

XIX. St. Laurence Justinian.
The 1. Patriark of Venice, died
in the Year, 455.

XX. St. Teresa.

A holy Virgin in Spain, who li-
ved and dyed in the last age.

Upon the view of these many Evi-
dences and multitudes of Authori-
ties, and upon the frequent perusal
of these Collections; you will undoubt-
edly by degrees render your Life
more easy unto you, and remove that
vulgar and universal error out of
your mind, concerning the dreadful
apprehension of Death; which you will
familiarily behold and heartily expect as
the happy period of your painfull and
dangerous Pilgrimage, and as the de-
sirable passage opening to eternal
Life, eternal rest, eternal felicity.

The

(I)

THE
Holy Desires
OF
DEATH.

Article I.

*The First Principle of St. Au- S. Aug.
gustin. That the Difference
which is between a Perfect
and Imperfect Christian, is,
That the first desires Death
with Ardour, and endures
Life with Patience; where-
as the second only receives
Death with Submission, and
hath not yet quitted all the
Tyes which ordinarily fasten
men to Life.*

B

Will

S. Aug.
In Epist.
2. Joan.
tract 9.

Will you know what
Progresse you have
made in Charity? Examin
your-self upon these Words
of St. *John* : *The Perfection*
of our Love towards God, con-
sists in having an entire Con-
fidence in him for the day of
Judgment. So that Charity is
perfect in all them who have
this Confidence. What is
it, to have this Confidence
for the day of Judgment?
'Tis not to dread its com-
ming.

Some there are who do
not believe this day will
come. I speak not of these
impious Wretches; for what
likelihood is there that they
can either desire or dread
that

that which they believe will never come to pass? But as soon as a man begins to believe the day of Judgment he must also begin to fear it. True it is that so long as he only fear's it, he hath not yet Confidence, because he is not replenish'd with this Charity which animates Faith. Nevertheless this Fear ceases not to produce excellent Effects. It is a beginning of Mortification and of good Works; and it ordinarily falls out that by these exercises of Virtue, they come to desire what formerly they only dreaded. Then a Soul looks no longer upon that last day, but as the first of her Happiness; nor doth

S. Aug.

Epist. 1.

Joan. c.

4. v. 18.

The Holy Desires

4.
S. Aug.

she go against her own Sentiments, when she Prays; Lord, *Let your Kingdom come*. In effect, He who fears lest the Kingdom of God should come, fears also lest his Prayer should be heard. Judge now in what manner one Prays, when one fears to obtain what one demands: whereas he who Prays with that Confidence which perfect Charity gives him, desires effectually that what he demands may be speedily granted him.

We may therefore say that there are yet some imperfect persons, to whom Sufferings and Death serve only for an exercise of their Patience and of their Courage;

rage; and who are not yet strong enough to desire to S. Aug. Suffer or to Die. These, because they desire to live longer, simply suffer Death when it befalls them. But there are others more perfect, who are so unfetter'd from Life, that in lieu of loving it as a good thing, they endure it as an Evil.

All that the former can do, is to conquer the repugnance of Nature, and to submit themselves to the Will of God: because finally they like rather to conform themselves to what he hath ordained concerning them, than to leave themselves to be transported with a bootless weakness in following

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B 3

their

S. Aug.

their own will. Thus, altho' the desire of this present Life struggles in their Heart against the necessity of Dying ; yet they arm themselves with Fortitude and with Patience to receive Death with Peace and with Submission. One may say, That the Christians who are in this Estate, suffer Death with Patience.

But the Others, who desire with the Apostle, that their Souls may be untied from their Bodies to be united to Christ Jesus ; are not content to suffer Life as a necessary Evil ; but they receive Death it self with Joy as a great Good : because they find nothing in this present Life

Life but subjects of Disquiet
and of Sorrow, and that *S. Aug.*
they find in Death the end
of all these Pains, and the
beginning of an Eternal Fe-
licity.

Article. I I.

*The Second Principle of St. Au-
gustin, That proportionally
as the Christian feels his Love
for Virtue to encrease; he feels
also the Desire of Death to en-
crease within him.*

WHen a man hath a live-
ly and sincere Faith,
which gives him a sight of the
place whether he is to walk
during his abode upon Earth;
and of that where he shall ar-

S. Aug. rive one day, after his going forth of this World: the Desire of Death ought to encrease in him, according to the encrease of his Piety: because it sufficeth not that Faith makes him see that Celestial dwelling, where he is to be settled for ever; but Charity must also make him love it, and desire speedily to obtain it. Now 'tis impossible for him to have this Disposition in his Spirit and in his Heart, without being glad to go forth of this Life.

An

of Death.

*An Excellent Passage of one of
St. Augustins Disciples, who
made a Collection of his Sen-
tences and of his chief Max-
ims: where the two precedent
Principles are united.*

St. Aug.

IF we consult our Faith, and
have the Sentiments which
it ought to inspire into us;
we shall acknowledg, that
Sanctity of Life and a Desire
of Death are things insepara-
ble. For one cannot be truly
a Christian if one loves not
God, and if one aspires not to
that Eternal Life which he
hath promis'd to all them
who love him. We see it by
Faith, we expect it by Hope,
we love it and we desire it by

*This Col-
lection is
attributed
to St. Pro-
per.*

B. 5

Charity.

S. Aug. Charity. According as a man advances in the practice of these Virtues, he advances also in the exercise of this holy Desire. The more ardour he hath for eternal Life, the less adhesion he hath to the temporal Life: and considering Death as the sole issue out of this World, and as the entrance into that Celestial Life, which ought to be the object of all our Desires, he looks with Joy upon that last moment which is to take him from off the face of the Earth. So that when Faith and Charity are perfect in a Soul, the Desire of Death is there at the same time so perfect, that it raises it-self above that love of Life, which blind and material

terial Nature inspires into us. But when Virtue is yet imperfect, although Faith persuades us that Death is advantageous unto us, yet Nature thwart's in us this holy Thought ; and we then feel that we possess Life with pleasure, and should lose it with pain and difficulty ; whereas perfect Christians endure Life with pain, and lose it with pleasure.

Article III.

St. Augustin having establish'd these two Principles ; proposes to himself the Objection of some persons of Piety, who fear the Judgments of God, and who

*The Holy Desires**S. Aug.*

who say, That they do not believe they should do well in desiring Death; and that it seems better to them to demand of God Time for Mortification, and for becoming more Perfect.

*Quaest.
Evan. in*

Mat. 9. 17.

I Know not upon what they can ground themselves, who having a sincere Faith, can say nevertheless that they would not dye so soon, to the end they might have more time to labour for their Salvation and their Perfection. For 'tis certain that the most infallible Mark which a Soul can have of her advancement in Virtue, is when she advances in this holy disposition which makes her desire Death.

Death. If then these persons will speak according to truth, *S. Aug.* Let them not say, I desire not to die so soon, to the end I may have time to become more virtuous; but let them rather say, I desire to live longer, because I am not virtuous enough to love Death. Thus, not to be willing to die so soon, is not to the Faithfull a means to acquire more Virtue; but 'tis a signe that they have not yet acquired any. Let them therefore who have hitherto said, that they would not die to the end they might become more perfect, say henceforth, That they desire to die: and this will make it appear, that they are arrived at Christian Perfection.

Article

S. Aug.

Article IV.

The Third Principle of S. Augustin: That there are among Christians two sorts of Fear to displease God; One of which is destroyed, and the Other strengthened by Charity. From whence this holy Doctor concludes, That Faithful Souls which are the true Spouses of Christ Jesus, fear nothing so much as to be for a long time separated from this Divine Bridegroom.

*In Psal.
127. Tr. 9.
n Epist.
Joan. &
pass.
Joan. 13.*

THere is a Fear which is banish'd by Charity, according to that word of Saint John: Fear is not found with Charity; but perfect Charity drives

drives out Fear : and he who fears, is not perfect in Charity. S. Aug.

There is another Fear, which the Royal Prophet calls, the Fear of our Lord ; that pure and chaste Fear, which remains for ever and ever. Which gives us occasion to observe, That there are two sorts of the Fear of God, one of which will subsist in Heaven with Charity, and the other will be banish'd thence ; the one will perish with Life, the other will remain eternally. Psa. 18 10

I cannot better explain unto you the Nature and the Properties of these two Fears, then in placing before your Eyes a Comparison which seems to me very just and very sensible. Figure to your selves

S. Aug.

selves two Women, One of them chaste, and the Other unfaithful to her Husband: Is it not true, that when their Husbands are absent, the unfaithful Woman fears at every hour the return of her Husband; and that on the contrary, the chaste Woman fears lest her Husband should stay too long from coming?

Our Souls are the Spoufes of Christ Jesus, and during the state of this mortal life, this Divine Bridegroom is separated from his Spoufes. Now if you agree to this truth, there remains no more, my Brethren, but to ask yourselves concerning the nature of the Fear which you feel; to see whether it is either
that

that imperfect Fear, which Charity ought to exclude, or *S. Aug.* that other tender and awful Fear, which is to remain eternally. O Christian Souls! do not neglect this occasion which I present unto you, to know well your selves. Question your Conscience: Will you know whether you truly love this Divine Bridegroom? Do you desire that he should come presently? or that he should yet for some time delay his coming? Behold, my Brethren, and consider how your Heart is thereupon disposed, and from thence you shall know what your Fear is, and what is your love. Alas! How many Christians are there to whom if one should

S. Aug.

Should tell this News, Christ
 Jesus will come to morrow
 to take you out of this World,
 they would say ; Lord, stay
 a little longer, I have only
 begun to taste Life, I have
 Youth and Health about me ;
 my House is not yet well esta-
 blished ; my Children are in
 their tender age and cannot
 pass without me ; I have in
 my mind great designs for the
 publick good ; the Poor have
 need of my assistance ; I per-
 form many good Works ; I
 render Justice without Passi-
 on and without Interest ; ano-
 ther will possess my place,
 who will not perchance ac-
 quit himself so worthily. Ra-
 ther take away from the
 Earth those Wicked ones,
 who

who only incommode the
 good people: It concerns the *S. Aug.*
 honour of your sacred Name
 to exterminate those Atheists
 who contemn you; it con-
 cerns your Glory to confound
 that Tyrant who abuses his
 power. Why strike you not
 with Death that Usurer who
 heaps up treasures at the
 charge of the Widow and of
 the Orphan? Why take you
 not an exemplary chastise-
 ment! upon that publick
 Blood-sucker who ruines a
 multitude of families? But as
 for us, who continually bless
 you, who give Alms, and
 who spread abroad in all pla-
 ces the effects of our cares and
 of our Liberalities, leave us
 to live to honour you. 'Tis
 thus

S. Aug.

thus that the major part of Christians would speak. But as for them who are arrived at such a degree of Perfection as to despise Life, the World, and themselves ; they, I say, who aspire to nothing else but to unite themselves to God for evermore ; they would make use of another manner of language. Come, they would say, Come, O thou too long expected Hour of the Bridegrooms arrival ! Our Souls always burning with a desire to be with him, find that all the moments of this miserable Life which separates us from him, are so many ages. Why do you stay, O Lord ? Have not our Sighs given you sufficiently to understand

of Death.

derstand that we languish
with the love of your beauty.
You need but only knock at
the door, our Heart watches,
even whilst our Eyes seem to
be shut up by Sleep.

Article V.

*Other Principles of St. Au-
gustin : That we are not happy
in this Life, but by the Hope
and by the Desire of Eternal
Goods : That to be worthy to
enter into the Celestial Coun-
treys, we must be willing to go
forth of our Exile : That the
whole Life of a Christian is but
a holy Desire of things to come,
and a generous Contempt of
present Goods.*

We

The holy Desires

S. 22.
In Psal.
83. & a-
1105.

th
WE are here in the Re-
gion of Death; but we
are not, thanks be to God, to
remain here always. We
are to pass from the Region of
the Dead to that of the Li-
ving. In the mean while,
there is nothing in this Regi-
on of the Dead but labour,
sorrow, fear, affliction, tem-
ptation. The persons who
are unhappy in the World,
are there truly unhappy; but
they who believe themselves
to be there happy, do there
enjoy but a false happiness;
and a false happiness is a true
unhappiness. Thus, to speak
truth, there are none but on-
ly they who suffer not them-
selves to be blinded by the
false

false felicities of this Life, who can enjoy in this World *S. Aug.* a true Comfort, and who can hope to enjoy one day a true Felicity in the other.

You then who agree to this, that one is miserable in this Life, listen to the Saviour of the World, who tells you, *Happy are they Mat. 5. 5. who weep and lament.* O how mysterious is the Felicity of these Tears? Nothing is so agreeable to Misery as to Sigh and to Weep: nothing is so opposite to misery, as to be Happy. Why then O Lord, do you speak of a certain kind of men who are afflicted and who at the same time are Happy? Let us endeavour, my Brethren, to

S. Aug.

to comprehend the truth of these Words. Why doth Christ Jesus call them Happy who Weep ; and what Happiness do they possess in lamenting ? This Happiness, O Christians, 'tis the Contempt of Life, 'tis the Desire of Death. They lament the length of their Banishment ; they weep out of compassion for the blindness of them who are tyed to the Earth ; they weep finally out of the impatience they have to come to that dear Countrey which God hath promis'd them : and whatever Beauty presents it-self to their eyes upon the banks of the Rivers of *Babylon*, they stay not upon them but to weep.

Blessed

Blessed are they who weep in
 this manner, because they shall ^{S. Aug.}
 be comforted, and because a
 great recompense is reserved ^{Mat. 5. 5.}
 for them in Heaven. ¹²

But the better to know their Happi-
 ness, let us mark a little the
 misfortune of such as are in
 Criminal Joy of Worldlings.

Their Heart is only sensi-
 ble of the objects of their
 Passions: they make it their
 whole study to seek out
 new Pleasures: yet what-
 ever care they employ in it,
 a disgust so closely follows
 the enjoyment, that all
 their industry cannot soon
 enough furnish new inven-
 tions to entertain this di-
 versity. The excess of good
 Cheer takes away their ap-

C

petit

S. Aug.

petit and ruins their Health ;
 a tender and constant Freind-
 ship tire's them ; the Best
 entertainment grows tedious
 to them ; their own great-
 ness perplexes and combes
 them ; if they are in com-
 pany they would be alone,
 and yet they cannot endure
 solitude. The Rich envy's
 the tranquillity of the Poor ;
 the Ambitious wishes for
 wealth to raise himself to
 honour ; the Voluptuous
 finds that every thing in-
 commodates him, and creates
 to himself a true torment
 by his solicitude in seeking
 for his pleasure. Finally, if
 we look upon things but
 only with human aspects,
 they are extremely unhappy.

But

But the most terrible of all their miseries, is, That the ^{S. Aug.} disgust they conceive of this Life, doth not move them to desire another. They languish, they sigh, they weep sometimes in the middle of their delights: but their delights will soon have an end and their tears will never be dried up: And after they have wept in this Life, they shall be plunged in darkness of Hell, where Despair and Rage shall make them weep eternally.

Consequently to this Maxim,
St. Augustin teaches moreover *Ep. ad*
elsewhere: That all the Life ^{Probam.}
of a Christian ought to be ^{Tract. 4. in}
but a holy desire of Death ^{Ep. Joan.}
and of the goods of Eterni- ^{Psalm in}

S. Aug.

ty. No man, *says this great Saint*, going from Earth shall arrive at Heaven, to be there satiated with that eternal Justice, which makes up all the joy of the Blessed; unless he hath had an ardent thirst, and an unsatiable hunger thereof, whilst he was yet in the world.

And therefore it is Written,

Mat. 5. 6. That they who have an Hunger and they who have a Thirst of Justice, shall be happy, because they shall be satiated. It is then most certain, That all the Justice of Man upon earth, is no other thing than a Thirst and an ardent desire of the Eternal Justice. But how can one desire that Eternal Justice, if one love's
Life,

S. Aug.

Life, if one dreads Death, and if one doth not even desire to die in order to possess in Heaven this Justice which one cannot possess upon Earth? For the Felicity of a Christian cannot be perfect unless his Charity is also perfect; and the perfection of Charity is no other thing than this Eternal Justice, which consists in knowing God and in possessing him perfectly. 'Tis for this reason that the true Christians look not upon all the things of the Earth but with the eye of Faith, nor love them but with the Spirit of Charity. Now Faith and Charity do not link themselves to that which is perishable.

S. Aug.

He who practises these two Virtues, possesses temporal Goods, without permitting himself to be possessed by them. He gathers Riches, but 'tis to distribute them liberally to the Poor. He hath care of his Health without being disquieted, as well knowing that all the precautions one takes to preserve it are useless, and sometimes even criminal, when one submits them not to the orders of Providence. Altho' his Honour is dear unto him, he ceases not to suffer calumnies with patience. He is tender for his Freinds, without having effeminate complacencies for them. Finally, he resembles

a Traveller in all things, who comforts himself when the weather is bad, or his lodging incommodious, because he prepared himself for all sorts of sufferings, and for that he expects no repose but in the end of his journey. Thus, let detraction decry him, let poverty oppress him, let sicknesses torment him, let the loss of Friends afflict him; the desire of Death and the Hope of the other Life render his Soul unmovable amidst all these miseries. This Desire and this Hope are as two Ankers, which resist the most furious Tempests, and which defend his Heart against the Violence of Passions,

S. Aug.

ons, and against the blows
of Fortune.

Article v.

There are an infinity of other
such-like Thoughts and Ex-
pressions in St. Augustin.
But it will perhaps suffice to
have related these which we
have collected from many
passages of his Writings to
serve for the Foundation and
for the Principles of this
Work.

THis holy Doctour drew
from the sacred Scrip-
tures and from the Traditi-
on of the Church, the sub-
stance of these Maxims
and

and the Fathers who went before him, or they who followed him, have explicated themselves in the same manner upon the same subject. *Tertul*

Tertullian says, That the Christians were distinguished from all other men by the Desire of Death, That they look upon it as a Grace which is to crown all their Graces, and That it is principally that which they demand of God every day in their Prayers.

What, I pray you, is the Idea we ought to have of *In Apoll*
Christians? The Christians *& passion*
are certain people ever more ready to die; who have this thought imprinted in
C 5 their

Tersul.

their Spirit and this desire engraved in their Heart ; who look upon Death as the end of their servitude and the beginning of their happiness. 'Tis, as one would say , a People and a Nation of men distinguish'd from all others by the contempt they have of Life. Moreover they are ready to lose it ; and that which afflicts others comforts them ; for they know that Baptism hath already separated them from the World, and therefore they are glad when Death comes to deliver them out of it for evermore. They conceive it to be a want of Faith for one to testify the least fear of Death in the most dangerous

dangerous diseases, or at the
 sight of the most cruel tor-
 ments. Is there question of
 suffering for God? One may
 perceive Joy painted in their
 countenances, they disdain
 the Tyrants, they encourage
 their Executioners, they cast
 themselves with alacrity in-
 to the flames. All that pro-
 longs their Life, retards their
 Felicity. Let's go die, say
 they, we are Christians,
 we glory in it, and the glo-
 ry of a Christian is to die
 courageously for his Master.
 too happy we, who being
 the Disciples of Christ Jesus,
 may die as he did.
 True Christians, says Ter-
 tullian in another place, desire
 with an extreme passion to
 break

Tertul.

break the Chains which tye
 them to the Earth, and to
 go to reign in Heaven with
 Christ Jesus. Our Soul 'tis
 true, is no longer a slave to
 the Devil, since the Saviour
 of the World hath ransomed
 it: but our Body is yet un-
 der his empire: He can raise
 Persecutions against us, and
 expole us to the rage of our
 Enemies. Shall we fear him
 for so small a matter? Shall
 we not have the courage
 to free our selves from his
 power? What is it that
 Death hath so terrible in it,
 since Christ Jesus hath shew-
 ed us the example of dying
 well? There is no other way
 to come to the Kingdom
 which he hath prepared for
 us.

us: Let's die with him, O
Christians, if we will reign
with him. These thoughts
are the ordinary entertain-
ment of the Faithful, and
the continual object of their
views. The Pagans are con-
founded, and the Devils
despair, but the Angels re-
joyce at their resolution.

This Constancy which the
Christians testify in affront-
ing Death, and this con-
tempt they have of Life,
are so linked to the Spirit
of Christianisme, that even
altho' the Son of God should
not have expressly signified
that Christians ought to
demand to die in demand-
ing the Comming of his
Kingdom; yet they would
not

Tertullian

not have ceased to offer up
to him this Petition. So true
it is, that the sole character
of Christian ought to inspire
a continual contempt of Life,
and an ardent desire to pos-
sess the Kingdom which
Christ Jesus hath promised
to his Elect.

Article VII.
That which Tertullian hath so
well expressed in few Words,
hath been very largely expli-
cated by St. Cyprian in his
my passages of his Writings,
and Principally in the Dis-
course he composed upon Mor-
tality. We have collected
some Maxims of the great
Bishop

Bishop concerning this Subject,
and particularly of the eager- S. Cypri-
ness which true Christians
ought to have to get forth of
this Life.

The First Maxim of St. Cy-
prian ; That the Christians
who fear Death, are Unjust
and Unreasonable, since in
saying to God every day in
the Lords Prayer, Thy
Kingdom come, they desire
our Lord to hasten their
Death.

WE may say that they
who fear Death,
shew plainly that they know
not the prime Principles of
Christianism. 'Tis surely to
have little love for Christ
Jesus,

S. Cypri.

Jesus, to apprehend the ar-
rival of his Kingdom. May
not one say, That we are
the Enemies of the Son of
God, and that we fear he
should ascend his Throne to
punish them who have of-
fended him? What is there
more unjust and more un-
reasonable than to wish eve-
ry day that the Will of God
may be accomplished, and
yet to complain when it is
accomplished? Nevertheless
'tis this disorder into which
most of us fall. We do as
those bad Servants and those
rebellious Slaves, who must
be trailed against their will
into the presence of their
Masters. We pass forth of
this Life rather by necessity
than

than by submission; and by such a cowardly repugnance we make it plainly appear that we have no Faith, nor any Hope to be rewarded by him who calls us. Surely I cannot comprehend how 'tis possible that a Christian Soul can divide her-self into such contrary Sentiments. For if the Captivity of the Earth doth yet please us, why do we pray that the Kingdom of Heaven may come? To what end do our Lipps pronounce so frequently such holy Prayers, in which we demand of God that the day of our glory and of our triumph may arrive? Is it that we had rather serve the Devil upon

S. Cypri.

S. Cyprian.

upon Earth, then reigns in
 Heaven with Christ Jesus?
 Either let us change our be-
 lief, or else let us change
 our language; let us speak
 like Pagans if we will live
 like Pagans. Let us dread
 Death, if we hope for no-
 thing after Death. But why
 should we not despise this
 Life, if we expect a better?
 Let's make it appear that
 we submit our selves to Faith,
 and that we are fully per-
 swaded of the truth of the
 Promises of Christ Jesus.

of God which we demand
 of God in the day of our
 glory and of our triumph
 may arrive & is that we
 had rather serve the Devil
 upon

The

The Second Maxim of St. Cy- S. Cypr,
 prian: *That 'tis no wonder*
if Infidells and Wicked peo-
ple fear Death: but that
this Weakness is not tolerable
in Christians.

Let him dread to die, who
 hath not obtain'd as we
 have a new birth of the ho-
 ly Ghost, and who not be-
 ing regenerated in the Wa-
 ters of Baptism, shall be cast
 headlong into the Flames
 which can never be quench-
 ed. Let him dread to die;
 who hath not the sacred
 Unction, and who hath not
 been marked with the ado-
 rable and wholsom sign of
 the Cross of our Lord Je-
 sus

S. Cypri.

sus Christ. Finally, let him
dread to die, who in the
delay of his Death find's al-
so the delay of the punish-
ments which expect him af-
ter Life. But he who is tru-
ly a Christian, and who
loves God, can fear nothing,
and ought to hope all. Death
is not a Death for him, but
a Life. 'Tis not a destru-
ction of his Being, 'tis a
changing of estate which is
to end all his Miseries. Since
Death hath been joyned to
the source of Life, which
is Christ Jesus, it hath lost
all its malediction and all
its bitterness. It hath chang'd
those horrible names which
affrighted us, to take the
pleasing names which com-
fort

fort us. Now the Christians call it a Sleep which charms our displeasures, a Passage which conducts us to the Celestial Country, a happy Ship-wreck which casts us into the Haven. So long as man was yet in the first state of Innocence, Death was a punishment wherewith the Divine Justice threatned him if he should fall into Sin; but in the state of Grace, 'tis a Sacrifice by which it purifies the Just, and renders him worthy of Eternal Glory. Formerly, to terify man, it was said, to him; *If thou Sinnest, thou shalt die*; and now, to support him and to encourage him in the sufferings of this Life,

S. Cypri.

Life, it is said unto him :
If thou dieſt not thou wilt Sin ;
 and the Apoſtles exhort us
 to comfort one another by
 the conſideration of the near-
 neſs of Death and of the
 Coming of Chriſt Jeſus.

*The Third Maxim of St. Cy-
 prian: That Chriſtians ought
 not to love the World be-
 cauſe the World hates Chri-
 ſtians: and That when Death
 delivers them from all com-
 merce with the World, 'tis
 a ſubject of Joy for them.*

• **T**Is for him who finds
 his delights in a world-
 ly Life; to deſire to remain
 long in the World. 'Tis for
 him whom the World keeps
 as

as it were enchanted by the
charm of pleasures, to de- *St. Cyprian.*
sire not to go forth of the
World. But since the World
hates true Christians, why
do you who are Christians
love the World which loves
not you? Why do you not
rather love Christ Jesus who
loves you? and who calls
you to crown you with all
sorts of Goods? Why do
you not frequently consi-
der, that you have renounc'd
the World by the Vows
of your Baptism; and that
you stay not in the World
during the time of your life,
but as a Stranger during
his Journey? Hate then the
World, since the World hates
you; and desire that happy
day

S. Cyprian

day in which you shall pass
into the true place of your
repose, there to enjoy the
liberty of the children of
God.

*The Fourth Maxim of St. Cy-
prian: That Death ought
to be consider'd by Christians
as a passage from the mis-
eries of this Life to a glori-
ous Immortality.*

TIs certain that the Ser-
vants of God will not
enjoy a perfect Peace till
Death shall deliver them
from all the miseries of this
World, and untill they are
arrived to that happy Ha-
ven, where an eternal Tran-
quillity reigneth. *It is the*
sole

sole means which is left
 us to possess that Peace *S. Cypri.*
 without trouble, that Joy
 without sorrow, and that
 Pleasure without disgust,
 which we in vain seek to
 find else-where. So that we
 ought to be so far from fear-
 ing Death which procures
 us so many Goods, that on
 the contrary we ought to
 rejoyce when it approches.
 In effect, this Life is it any
 other thing than a Com-
 bate and a continual Temp-
 tation? Let the most hap-
 py persons of the World
 examin themselves, and then
 let them speak sincerely;
 they will avouch that their
 purest Joy is evermore trou-
 bled by some pensiveness;
 D that

S. Cypri.

that all their Sweets, are intermixed with bitterness ; that their Honours are accompanied with vexations and sollicitudes ; and finally, that Evils and Goods are linked together with an inseparable colligation. Yet if Man hath any desire in this unfortunate Life, 'tis surely a desire to be happy. It must needs be that he hath formerly had in himself an original greatness, whereof there remains in him only sad ruines upon which he strives to re-build some kind of Felicity. All his thoughts aym at this end ; but he knows not distinctly either the Happiness he hath lost, or the way he must take to recover

recover it. His Soul conducts him always towards Heaven from whence she derives her birth, and his Senses dragg him always towards the Earth, whereof they are formed. He neither knows what he is, nor what he would ; and like to a Vessel floating at the mercy of the Winds and of the Waves, he serves for a wethercock to fortune and to his own cupiditie. Let him fortify himself with the wisest Maxims of Phylosophy ; let experience, a good wit, and a human reason, guide him in his actions ; let him make choice among all the goods of the Earth, of them which are least sub-

S. Cypri.

ject to change, and which are most capable to render a man happy : all his labour vanishes into smoak, he will repent him-self of his choice, he will seek after other goods, and those other goods will deceive him. But when will he be able to stop his affections ; what means will he find out to preserve them , and to preserve himself ? Ever since this blinde Love of Life hath carried men on to invent Remedies to prolong it, have they met with any one against Death ? Why then do they not look upon it rather as an infallible Remedy against their Disquiets, and as the wholesom end of all their Evils ? Ah,
'tis

'tis that they are not truly Christians ; 'tis that they know no other Life than this ; 'tis that they doubt of Gods promises , which never deceive us, and that after so many dismal proofs of the uncertainty of the things of this World, they love rather still to deceive themselves than to acknowledge that they are deceived. But the true Disciples of Christ Jesus , being perswaded of the truth of his Words, and enflamed with his love, have no difficulty to undeceive themselves from the vanities of the World, to contemn Life and even to take an extreme pleasure in seeking after Death ; because they

S. Gre-
gory of
Nazian.

are assured that no one can be perfectly happy, untill he dies for Christ Jesus, and untill he reigns with him in his Heavenly Kingdom.

St. Gregory of Nazian, in his Funeral Orations, furnishes excellent thoughts concerning the obligations which Christians have to despise Life and to desire Death : and particularly in the Elogium he composed for his Brother Cezarius.

WHen I consider the happiness which our Kindred have acquired by dying, and the little they have lost in loosing this unhappy

happy Life ; so far from
 from afflicting my self, *S. Gre. 2*
 I feel my self transported *gory of*
 with joy ; and I say to God : *Nazian.*
 When shall it be, O Lord,
 that you will take us , as
 you have them , out of this
 strange Land, and that we
 shall go into our lovely
 Countrey to joyn our selves
 with them who are there
 arrived before us ? When
 shall it be, that Death shall
 put us in a condition to par-
 take with them the pleasures
 of Paradise, and to lead to-
 gether an eternally happy
 Life ? In effect, my Brethren,
 what can we expect during
 the short time which remains
 of our Life , but to see day
 after day more miseries, to
 suffer

S. Gre-
gory of
Nazian.

more evils, and to
commit more Sins than we
have hitherto committed.

'Tis therefore this confi-
deration, and not the loss
of our Freinds; 'tis the dan-
ger of offending God to
which we are exposed du-
ring our Life, and not the
grief for their Death, which
ought to be the true sub-
ject of our Tears. Let's weep,
my Brethren, but let us
weep as *David* did, for that
our Pilgrimage is prolonged.
Lets afflict our selves for
that our Exile is not ended.
Lets weep because we love
a Life subject to so many
miseries, and which inces-
santly exposes us to lose the
Grace of God. This is, my
Brethren,

Brethren, a just cause
 our sighs and tears. *Pre-5. Gre.*
 therefore sigh over our selves *gory of*
 with the holy Apostle, and *Nazian*
 let us say, This base Cot- *2. Cor. 2*
 tage built of clay, wherein *4 and 5*
 we now lodg, shall it ne-
 ver be destroy'd? Shall we
 not soon dwell in that other
 house which is not made by
 the hand of man, and
 which shall endure eternal-
 ly? For how long shall we
 yet ly oppress'd under the
 weight of this mortal Body?
 And till when must we
 trayl after us in all pla-
 ces a living Sepulcher, where
 our Soul is as it were bur-
 ed in the Flesh, and infected
 with a corruption greater
 than that of real Graves?

D 5

Ab

S. O. Nazian.
gory of

My Brethren, if the
 Death of Sin is not the sub-
 ject of your griefs and af-
 fliction, you have no sub-
 ject that is legitimate. But
 that which ought to cover
 us with shame, is, That we
 love this Life, all miserable
 as it is, and that we make
 much of this Body which
 detain's our Soul captive.
 'Tis true, that we are un-
 willing to offend God ; but
 we are willing to continue
 in a state of offending him ;
 at least 'tis that which we
 desire when we desire to
 Live. Do you then know
 for what a true Christian
 ought not to afflict himself ?
 I repeat it over again to you,
 a true Christian ought not
 to

to afflict himself. *61*
he lives too long. *S. Gre*
thing that delays his *gory*
delays also his happiness.
but what happiness? A hap-
piness which is pure in its
enjoyment, immense in its
greatness, and eternal in
its duration; Finally, a hap-
piness which comprehends
the possession of God him-
self, and which consequent-
ly surpasses the intelligence
and the desire of man. Be-
hold that which ought to
make us sigh without ceasing
towards Heaven, and to say
with the Prophet; *My Soul* *Psalm 118*
languishes; O Lord, she falls v. 81.
almost into a swoon in the ex-
pectation of your Salvation.

For my own part, through
the

Desires

S. C. Brethren, if the
gory of Nazian. of Sin is not the sub-
ject of your griefs and af-
fliction, you have no sub-
ject that is legitimate. But
that which ought to cover
us with shame, is, That we
love this Life, all miserable
as it is, and that we make
much of this Body which
detain's our Soul captive.
'Tis true, that we are un-
willing to offend God ; but
we are willing to continue
in a state of offending him ;
at least 'tis that which we
desire when we desire to
Live. Do you then know
for what a true Christian
ought not to afflict himself?
I repeat it over again to you,
a true Christian ought not

to

to afflict himself, that he lives too long. A thing that delays his, delays also his happiness; but what happiness? A happiness which is pure in its enjoyment, immense in its greatness, and eternal in its duration; Finally, a happiness which comprehends the possession of God himself, and which consequently surpasses the intelligence and the desire of man. Behold that which ought to make us sigh without ceasing towards Heaven, and to say with the Prophet; *My Soul languishes, O Lord, she falls almost into a swoon in the expectation of your Salvation.* Psalm 118 v. 81.

For my own part, through
the

S. of God, I fear
that my Body should
be corrupted, since it's nature is
to be perishable. I am per-
swaded that the ruine of that
which is materiall and ter-
restriall in me, cannot chuse
but be very advantagious un-
to me. Let's leave to the
wicked the care to flatter a
Body which kills the Soul,
and which one cannot keep
long alive. Those unhappy
wretches tast not the goods
of the Spirit, because they
have no feeling of Hope for
another Life. And surely I do
not at all wonder that they
place their soveraign good
in this mortall Life, in
Health, in good cheer, and
in the other pleasures of the
senses.

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senses. But for us, my Brethren, who are convinced that all those goods are but vanity, and that they will be dissipated in less time than the dew of the morning; let us say with the *Apostle*, would to God that by a lively Faith and by an ardent Charity I had so mortified my Body, that it were not capable to detain my Soul: for if I could totally bury my self with Christ Jesus, I should be assured to be resuscitated, and to live with him eternally.

S. Gregory of Nazian.

Article

S. Gregory
Nisse.

Article IX.

Sr. Gregory Bishop of Nisse,
hath made a Discourse to
shew : That we should be
so far from lamenting them
who go forth of this Life,
that we ought to envy and
desire their happiness. He
proves this Truth by many
reasons, which we give
in brief; and in the end he
explicates it by an excellent
comparison of the state of men
in this present Life, with the
state of an Infant enclosed
in his Mothers Belly. He
says afterwards, That they
who lament the Death of their
Neighbour, or who are a-
fraid

afraid to die, are as little reasonable as Children who cry when they are born into the World, because they are not sensible of the happiness they have in being delivered out of the most dismal of all Prisons.

S. Gregory
Nisse.

They who excessively afflict themselves at the Death of their Kindred and Friends, are for the most part very weak Spirits, who suffer themselves to be ledd by the movings of Nature and of Custom. They weep ordinarily, because 'tis the custome to weep upon such occasions. They grieve for themselves in the person of another, because in losing him they lose some

Orat. de
mortuis.
To 3.

*S. Grego-
ry Nisse.*

some advantage which they reaped from him; or else, they weep because they fancy a false honour of appearing to be of a tender and good nature. There is moreover a certain pleasure in Tears, and one delights to draw compassion or esteem from others by weeping. Finally, in whatever manner we weep over the Dead, 'tis always a weakness; and we should never fall into it, if we gave our selves time to consider, That the orders of Providence are unalterable, and that human things change incessantly. For is it not a folly to grieve for the Dead as if they could have lived always; and to live so, as if one were never to die?

To

To get forth of this error,
we need only to consider a little the difference there is between the solid and infinite goods we hope for in heaven, and Goods so vain and so short which we possess upon Earth: and we shall clearly see, That if Christians ought to weep, 'tis not for that their Friends are too soon dead, but for that they themselves live too long. For the greatest of all miseries, is to languish in the World amidst all manner of Evils, and to be for a long time deprived of the happiness which those very Friends possess whose loss we lament.

I demand therefore of you,
my Brethren, in the first
place

*S. Gregory
Nisse.*

*S. Gregory
Nisse.*

place, wherein do you believe that Mans soveraign Good doth consist? For if we will reason according to the Rules of Christian Phylosophy, the only Good which deserves to be call'd Good, is that which belongs to all, and for always. The Pagan Phylosophy which reasons only upon false lights, gave formerly the name of Good to such things as regard only either mens Bodies or their Fortunes. But is it not a horrid blindness, to establish the soverain Good in Beauty, in Strength, in Dexterity, and in such other like exterior Qualities? These wise profane people, did they not perceiye that these

these things , which are given but to a few, diminish with age, perish in a short time, and are accompanied with so many misfortunes, that one must be very stupid not to aspire after a better happiness ? Did they not see, I say, what we now see, That Riches, Dignities, and even Crowns , which without doubt raise men to the highest pitch of this false Felicity , pass from one Family to another ; that the most elevated Thrones fall down to the ground ; that the most glittering Fortune is but a smoke which is dissipated in an instant, and which leaves nothing else behind it but the smut of the

S. Gregory
Nisse.

*S. Gregory
Nisse.*

the bad actions which were done to acquire it ? These men who affected the name of Wise, were they senseless enough not to know, That the best grounded Glory is subject to the darts of Detraction, and that the people, by one and the same capriciousness, sets up and pulls down, the reputation of the greatest men ? If one makes use of Treasures, they are consumed ; if one hides them, they are useless : But what matters it whether it be Covetousness or Prodigality which makes us poor, since the miseries which accompany poverty are not so unsupportable as are the disquiets which attend upon riches ?

riches ? Finally, these Wise persons who had so great a knowledge of human things, could they not comprehend that all the Goods of this Life are meer illusions ; they who had every day the experience thereof ? Ha, my Brethren, it was because Faith did not clear them : it was because in the darkness of Paganism Pride being the soul of all their thoughts and of all their actions, they sought in themselves a Good which cannot be found without renouncing those false Goods and ones own self.

It is not so with Christians; they seek their sovereign happiness in Humility, in the contempt of Life, and in their

*S. Grego-
ry Nisse.*

*S. Gregory
Nisse.*

their self-annihilation; because they are perswaded that one possesse all in possessing God, and one possesse not him but by uncloathing ones self of all things; and by consequence, that one must make no other provision for Heaven but that of good Works; For there one shall neither suffer hunger, nor cold, nor the injuries of Ayr, nor the cruelties of the wicked. One shall not there be embusied in labouring nor in sowing the earth, in sayling on the Sea, in building Palaces, in trafficking, in pleading, in filling the Spirit with Sciences, in inventing laws, nor in causing them to be kept. There will neither be
War

War, nor Proceſs, nor Ty-
ranny, nor Malady, nor Po-
verty: and as the Goods there
will be without end and with-
out mixture, ſo nothing can
there either corrupt or
change them.

Surely, when I conſider
the weakneſs of them who
afflict themſelves for their
Freinds departure out of the
world, and who themſelves
fear to follow them, I cannot
ſufficiently admire it. If a
man, after he had paſs'd the
time of his tender Youth in
an obſcure Priſon, and liv'd
as it were in a continuall
night, ſhould be displeas'd
with them who obtain'd his
liberty to go forth to con-
template the Sun, the Starrs,
the

*S. Grego-
ry Nisse.*

the Earth cover'd with fruits,
and the other Beauties of the
Univers, and finally to place
him in a full liberty : what
would you think of this
man who had such strange
humours ? Without doubt,
my Brethren, you would be-
lieve that he had lost his
Wits, and you would strive
to cure him of so extrava-
gant a folly. Permit me to
tell you that your selves are
in the same itate, and that
your errour is perhaps more
deplorable than his. You
are displeas'd at the happi-
ness which your Freinds en-
joy in being delivered out of
this miserable Prison of the
Body, and your selves fear
to go forth of it to go to
con-

contemplate in his glory the
Creator of the Sun, of the
Starrs, and of all the Beau-
ties of the Universe.

S. Grego-
ry Nisse

For my part, I avouch to
you that I cannot conceive
the cause of so great a stray-
ing in the human spirit,
unless it is that the criminal
curiosity of the first man
hath plunged all his poste-
rity in such a profound ig-
norance, that men know
not even what is convenient
for them. One may say that
we are become like unto a
Child, who being yet shut
up in his Mothers Belly, hath
not so much as the use of
his Senses. This Child hath
Eyes, and he sees not, he hath
Ears, and he hears not; he
E hath

*S. Gregory
Nisse.*

hath a rational Soul, and he knows not ; he neither understands what he is, nor what must become of him ; finally, he hath no knowledge of Life, which nevertheless is the sole Good in which he ought to be concerned. Is it not true that if this Child could reason, he would surely judge that Nature had not furnished him with all these faculties and all these organs, to be always deprived of their functions ? That having a Mouth, he was not to be nourished like a Plant ? That having Feet and Hands and all the other parts which compose his Body, he was not design'd to be always a lump

of

of Flesh, nor to live among
 nastinesses, and to be close
 shut up in a Dungeon? Is
 it not true, I say, that by
 making these reflexions, he
 would assuredly come to the
 knowledge of the Life he
 was to lead upon Earth?
 But because this Child doth
 not reason, that which
 should rejoyce him, afflicts
 him: he receives as an Evil
 all the advantages of his
 birth and of his liberty;
 and as if he lost a great Good
 in going forth of his Mothers
 Belly, he complains as soon
 as he comes into the World.

Behold, if I am not de-
 ceived, an image very much
 resembling these weak men,
 whom I undertook to con-

*S. Gregory
Ny. Nieff.*

vince. Now if there is any one of them who hear me, who is of the number of those blind persons who will not see the light : Ah , my dear Brethren, I conjure you to take some compassion of his blindness. 'Tis surely a shame for a Christian to lament for the Death of his Freinds, and to fear his own Death. This weakness is only pardonable in a Child. Let us then open our Eyes, let's act as reasonable men , let's live like Christians. 'Tis high time to conceive a horroure of our Prison , and to shake off the chains which detain us in it. Let's reflect that there is another Life than this ; let's awaken
our

our Faith ; let's excite our Hope , and finally let us comfort our selves ; lets rejoyce that our near Relations have acquired an eternal Happines by the loss of a miserable Life : lets burn with a holy Desire of Death : let's seek with ardour and receive with joy, that which will put an end to our afflictions, and give a beginning to our Felicity.

S. Gregory Nisse.

Article X.

Among all the Fathers of the Church, St. Ambrose is one of them who hath spoken best of Death. He made a particular Treatise De bono mor-

E 3

tis.

S. Ambrosius.

tis, Of the good of Death : where he says, That it frees us from the miseries of this Life, and from the servitude of Sin. He teaches, That 'tis Death which procures Immortality to our Soul, and a glorious Resurrection to our Body : and finally, That 'tis Death which gives us the means to testify our Gratitude, our Love, and our Zeal to Christ Jesus. Whence he concludes that if we have Faith, we ought to desire Death.

Life is a burthen, the weight whereof oppresses us ; and Death is the only succour which can discharge us of it. Life is a punishment, and

and Death is the sole means which remains for us to be releas'd of it. Did one ever see Slaves and miserable Wretches fear to be set at freedom and to be comforted? 'Tis from Death alone that we must expect this Comfort and this liberty.

S. Am-
bramse.

Now if we ought to love it, because its frees us from the miseries of Life; ought we not to love it more, because it delivers us from the bondage of Sin? For the most innocent of men is a Sinner as long as he is living; he must die to the end he may sin no more; and his Death is no less the end of his Sin, than of his Life.

E 4

But

*S. Am.
brose.*

But Death doth yet much more ; it breaks not the bonds of Sin, but to procure us the glorious liberty of the Elect. 'Tis Death which re-unites men to their beginning, makes them find their greatness and their felicity in the loss of their Lives. 'Tis Death finally, which delivering them from corruption, introduces them into an incorruptible and eternal Life. For as soon as Sin had given birth to Death, God drew from thence the Resurrection ; to the end that Sin ceasing by Death, Nature might always subsist by the Resurrection ; and that man dying to the Earth and to Sin, might live eternally

nally in Glory. Then this Word of the sacred Scrip- *S. Ambrose.*
ture will be accomplished :

Death hath been absorp'd and destroyed by an entire victory : *1 Cor. 15:55.*
and we shall be able to say with the Apostle : O Death, where is thy victory ? O Death, where is thy sting ?

But the greatest advantage which we derive from Death, is, That it gives us the means to imitate the Charity of Christ Jesus, and to do for him in some sort the same thing he hath done for us. We may be in dying the Victims of his glory, as he hath been the Victim of our Salvation ; and we may testify our gratitude by voluntarily offer-

S. Ambrose.

Rem. 8.

ing to him this Sacrifice. In effect, how will it be possible for us to satisfy otherwise our so great obligations? And moreover, if we well consider it, *What proportion is there between the sufferings of the present Life, and the felicitie of the other Life; between the torments of Death, and that immortal glory which God is one day to discover in us?*

Article XI.

An Excellent Doctrine of St. Ambrose, which establishes two manners of Living and of Dying set down in the Sacred Scripture. The first is that

that of just men, who Live
of Life, that is, who being ^{S. Am-}
in the Grace of God, enjoy ^{brose.}
the Life of Body and of Soul :

And the second, is that of
Sinners and wicked men,
who Live being dead, and
who leading an exteriour life
upon Earth, are dead inte-
riourly before God, As to the
two manners of dying, the
One is of them who die of
death, that is, who in dying
impenitent, endure a double
Death, that of the Soul, and
that of the Body : and the
Other is of the Sole Predesti-
nate, who die to live ; which
is understood of the Elect,
who endure the corporal
Death with patience and
with joy, to go to possess

S. Am-
brose.*an eternal and glorious
Life.*De Para-
diso. c. 9.

Ezech. 18.

WHen it is said in the
sacred Scripture, That
the man who shall keep Gods
Commandments, and shall
exercise Justice and Mercy
towards his Neighbour, *shall
live the Life* : we must not
believe that the Holy Ghost
made use without design of
such an extraordinary expres-
sion. *To live the Life* or of
Life, is to have a double
Life, One of which is exte-
riour and corporal, and the
Other interiour and spiritu-
al ; 'tis to lead the life of a
Man and of an Angel both
together ; 'tis to enjoy at
the same time Health and
Grace ;

Grace ; 'tis to live of a general Virtue, which includes all the natural and supernatural functions ; finally , 'tis the estate in which good people live upon Earth : an Estate truly happy for the time ; but from which one may fall, unless one labours continually to disengage himself from all adhesions to Life, by the thought and by the desire of Death.

On the contrary , *to die the Death* or of the Death, what is it else, according to the language of the Scripture, but to suffer a double Death, of the Body and of the Soul ? I mean , to be deprived of the ordinary use of this transitory Life , and of

S. Ambrose.

Gen. 2.

Exod. 21.

S. Am-
brose.

of the possession of eternal Life? And this is it which makes the misery of the reprobate, who for having over-much loved a criminal Life, die miserably in their crimes.

There is moreover among Christians another manner of dying, which is of them, who *die to life*, or who *die in living*; that is, who are dead and living both together. And these are they who live of the life of the Body, who enjoy a perfect health, who have beauty, strength, and dexterity; and yet who are dead to the Life of Grace, and are not animated with the Spirit of God. 'Tis of these men that it is said in
the

the Scripture *That they descend alive into Hell.* And 'tis in this sence that the words of the Apostle are to be understood ; *The Widow who lives in delights is dead, altho' she seems to be living.* And it is also the deplorable state of the wicked in this life, out of which they may nevertheless get forth by sincere penance.

S. Ambrose.

Psal. 54.
16.

1 Tim. 56.

Finally, the fourth kind of Christians, in relation to Life and to Death, and the most happy of all, is of them *who live by Death* ; such are all the Holy Martyrs, who expose not themselves to die but in hopes to live : the Body dies for a time, and the soul lives for an eternity.

*S. Am-
brose.*

ty. Ah, my Brethren, let us beware of being like to them who live outwardly being dead within. Let us desire to be rather of the number of those happy Dead, who die in apparence to live in effect. This was the sentiment of St. Paul in those celebrious Words: *I desire to be disengaged from the bonds of this Body, and to be with Christ Jesus.* It was also the thought of David, when he exclaims in one of his Psalms:

*Philip.
3. 23.*

*Psal. 119. 5. Alas ! how irksom is my exile !
I live here as a Stranger ;
my Soul is troubled to remain
so long among the Enemies of
peace. Behold this, is properly the state of the Predesti-
nate, who are afflicted at
their*

their stay upon Earth among the snares and the miseries wherewith this Life is replenished, instead of going to enjoy in Heaven those infinit Goods in their full greatness as well as in their eternal duration ; and which are the sole object of their Hope and of their Desires.

S. Ambrose.

Article XII.

The Homelies of St. John Chrysostom are full of excellent Instructions concerning Death. We have made choyce of such as seem'd most proper for this Work.

I. Instruction

S. Chry-
soft.

1. *Instruction of St. John Chrysostom ; where he shews what it is to be a Christian , and that his principal Character is to desire and to love Death.*

Hom. 24.
in Epist.
ad Hebr.

In Psal.
119.

Ad The-
od. lapsum.
c. 3.

A Christian evermore con-
siders himself upon Earth
as a man going onwards in
his way ; and the continual
reflexion which he makes
upon this quality of a Stran-
ger and of a Traveller, is
the foundation of all his
Virtues. For he who hath
sojourned upon Earth as a
Stranger , shall be a Citi-
zen in the Kingdom of Christ
Jesus. What is the care of
a Traveller ? 'Tis to cumber
himself

himself with nothing but what is necessary for his journey, to take the path which is shortest and most secure, to use all the diligence he possibly can, and not to fix his heart upon any thing he finds in his way, because he reserv's all his affections for his dear Countrey. According as he draws nearer to it he feels his impatience encrease to arrive at it; and as soon as he discovers it, he is so transported with Joy that he forgets the pain he hath endured, and the dangers he hath incurred: or if he keeps them in his memory, 'tis but as a valiant Champion remembers his wounds after he

S. Chrysost.

*S. Chry-
sost.*

he hath gain'd the Victory.

In effect, what is it that a Christian can love or fear upon Earth, which is not unworthy his affection or his fear ? Can all the favours of fortune give him a more glorious Title than that of Son of the most High, and of Brother of Christ Jesus ? For 'tis Christ Jesus himself who honours with this quality all them who have receiv'd his Word. And when the Pharisees say, that 'tis to commit a Blasphemy to give this honour to men, Jesus answers ; *Is it not written in your Law, I have said, you are Gods ?* Can the Scripture fail ? Wherefore , O Christians, labour so long

*John. 10.
34*

as

as you please to agrandise
your selves in the World : *S. Chry-*
Endeavour to become Rich, *soft.*
Learned , Conquerours ,
Princes, Kings, if you will.
Procure even, if it is possi-
ble , that your Kingdom
may be extended over the
whole Earth : what is there
in all this which can be
compared with the Kingdom
which God hath promised
you ?

You have therefore no-
thing to hope for in the
World ; Let us see now
what you have to fear :
Hunger or Thirst, say you ?
But hath not God said : *Bles-*
sed are they who are Hungry *Mat. 5: 6.*
and Thirsty, for they shall be
satisfied ? Is it Poverty ? He
hath

*S. Chry-
sost.
v. 3.*

*v. 11. and
12.*

hath also said ; *Blessed are the Poor , for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them.* Do you fear Injuries, Persecutions, Afflictions, Sicknesse? On the contrary it is Written ; *Rejoyce, give your minds to gladness , you who endure couragiously all these things for the glory of our Master , because you shall receive an ample reward in Heaven.*

You have then nothing else to dread, O Christians, but the delay of these rewards. And what can forward them but Death ? It is not therefore an Evil, as men of the vulgar sort believe ; on the contrary, 'tis a Good for them who have Faith ; not an ordinary Good, but

but the greatest of all transitory Goods. For if our sovereign Good is to possess the Celestial Kingdom, our greatest Good is surely that which hastens the possession hereof. S. Chrysost.

Wonder not therefore after this, O you Sensualists, if a Christian fully perswaded of these Truths, run's to Death with more ardour, than you run after Pleasures. Be no more surprized that he disdains your promises, that he despises your threats, that he treads under his feet your Idols, and that he triumphs over your Tyranny. Know that it shall sooner be drained dry in inventing torments, than the constancy

*S. Chry-
sost.*

*Jehn. 18.
36.*

cy of Christians will be shaken with your cruelty : because Death is a desirable Good for them who hope another Life, and because *our Kingdom is not of this World. For were our Kingdom of this World, we would fight to defend it against our Enemies.*

Nevertheless, do not fancy that the Christian remains upon the Earth, altogether stupid and insensible, as the trunk of a barren tree, which expects nothing but the mortal blow which must separate it from its roots. 'Tis true that the Christian desires Death, because it will end his pains : but yet he ceases not to make a holy use

use of Life. He employs all the moments thereof in good works; but whatever he doth in this Life, is only to procure him a happy end of it. For these holy Desires of Death do not hinder him from cherishing his Neighbours, from serving his Freinds, from loving his Brethren, and from acquitting himself of all Christian duties, more faithfully than they who perform them having only profane ends in their Freindships. But doth God ordain that he should quit them to come to him? he is evermore ready to depart: and although, according to the resentments of Nature, his Heart is as much
 F afflicted

S. Chrys-
ost.

afflicted in being separated from his Friends, as his Body in being separated from his soul; yet he ceases not to desire to be separated from them, to the end he may always possess them with God; and he prefers this eternal enjoyment before a possession of longest durance, from which one can only derive a weak and uncertain consolation. Wherefore he says at all times with the Apostle: *Christ Jesus is my Life; and Death is a gain for me. Unhappy man that I am! Who*

Philip. 1.
21.

Rom. 7:24.

will deliver me from the bonds of this mortal Body, that I may no longer be fastned to any thing but to Christ Jesus?

'Tis in effect the property

ty of a Christian and of a
 Child of God, not to tie ^{S. Chry-}
 himself to things present ^{soft.}
 and perishable, that he may
 sooner go towards his Fa-
 ther, who stretches forth
 his arms to receive him. This
 tender affection and this ho-
 ly impatience, spring from
 the purity of a good Con-
 science. He who is enflam'd
 with the love of eternal
 Goods, is not puff'd up in
 Prosperity, nor cast down
 in Adversity. He is as it
 were above the Earth, and
 dwells already in Heaven ;
 he conserves a Spirit ever-
 more equall in the inequali-
 ty of his lives events : Final-
 ly, he is like him, of whom
 it is said in Scripture : You

S. Chry-
sost.

2 Reg. c.

24. v. 17.

stick not either at the Benedi-
ctions, or at the Maledictions
of the World: but you are as
an Angel of our Lord.

Instruction of St. Chry-
sostom: That we should be
miserable if our Life were ne-
ver to end; and that if we
had a faithful and true be-
lief of the Resurrection, we
should not only not dread
Death, but we should ardent-
ly desire it.

In cap. 12.

Gen. Hom.

32.

In Cap. 5.

Gen. Hom.

21.

WHEN God gives us
Life, 'tis by an acti-
on of his Omnipotency; but
when he gives us Death,
'tis by a wholesome effect
of his Bounty. What would
Life be without Death?

A

A long sequell of miserie,
 an eternal Banishment, an
 infinite Punishment, and al-
 most as cruel as that of
 Hell. For what more pain-
 full torment could be infli-
 cted upon them who love,
 than to separate them for
 ever from their beloved ob-
 ject? If this Maxim is true,
 in sensual love, is it not in-
 finitely more in the Divine
 love? A Heart deeply en-
 gaged in this love, to which
 one should say, you shall
 remain always upon Earth,
 and you shall never see God;
 would it not have cause to
 esteem it self almost as mi-
 serable as the Damned? It
 is therefore truly said, That
 if Death is the chastisement
 of

S. Chrys. 2.
 soft.

In Cap. 5.
 Gen. Ham.
 67.

Serm. in
 Verba
 Pauli, De
 dormienti-
 bus nolo
 vis. Ser.

29.

S. Chry-
soft.

of ~~Adams~~ Sin, 'tis also the
greatest favour that God
could grant to the Children
of ~~Adam~~ after his Disobedi-
ence.

Before the coming of
Christ Jesus, Death was
frightfull, because men were
its slaves, and that they
could not obtain of God any
more then temporal rewards
for their good actions. But
since he hath ransom'd us
by his precious Blood, since
he hath loved Death and
made an alliance with it; it
is not only no longer an
Evil, but 'tis the greatest of
all Goods, 'tis the source
of all imaginable happineses.
Thus the fear of dying
ought to be consider'd as a
weakness

weakness of Nature, and
not as an effect of Reason. *S. Chrysost.*

'Tis true that all Creatures
have an extreme desire to
conserve their Being ; but
this desire is not pardona-
ble, except only in such peo-
ple who know nothing of
any other Life than this.
The true Christian who
hopes after this Death a
more noble and a more hap-
py Being than this first Be-
ing which he receiv'd by
being born into the World,
not only desires not to con-
serve it, but burns with im-
patience to loose it, that he
may acquire the possession
of a soverain Felicity.

There is no truth which
Christ Jesus preached and
assured

*S. Chry-
sost.*

*lb. &
Serm. de
tridua
Domini
Resurrec.*

*1 Cor. 18.
23.*

assured more authentically
than the Myſtery of the Re-
ſurrection : and there is no-
thing alſo which the Ene-
mies of Chriſtianism have
more thwarted. All the
World agrees that Chriſt
Jeſus died : *The Few* looked
upon his Croſs as a Scandall,
and the Gentiles as a Folly.
But as for the Reſurrection,
they all abſolutely deny it :
only the Chriſtians believe
that, and God gives to them
all ſorts of proofs thereof,
He permits that Souldiers
ſhould be placed around his
Sepulchre ; he riſes forth of
the Tomb in their preſence ;
the Stone is overturned ;
the Earth trembles ; the
Guards are affrighted ; the
Women

Women find him not where they had layd him; and the Angells assure them that he was risen: He appeared to his Disciples in particular, in publick, in divers places, in many encounters: He stays with them Forty days; he there drinks, he there eats; and when one of them protests that he would believe nothing of it, unless he could see him with his Eyes, and touch him with his Hands, our Saviour presents himself unto him, shews him the Wound of his side, will have him to put his Finger into it, and finally forces him by this last proof to cry out: *I doubt no longer; John. 20. you are my Lord and my God.*

S. Chry-
sost.

Thou hast believed, answered
Jesus, because thou hast seen :
Blessed are they who believe
without having seen. Can one
desire testimonies more evi-
dent and more authentical
of his Resurrection ? If we
are Christians, we must be-
lieve it : If we will be Hap-
py, we must believe it with-
out seeing it any otherwise
than by the Eyes of Faith.
What Happiness ought we
to expect from the Resurre-
ction and from the Promi-
ses of Jesus Christ ? Is it not
to be resuscitated as he is,
that we may reign with
him ? But to have a share
in his Resurrection and in
his Kingdom, we must ne-
cessarily die. Death therefore
is

is an inestimable advantage
and happiness : and thus, *S. Chrys.*
we ought not to dread it, *Soft.*
but with all our hearts to
desire it.

What advantage can we
find by living longer ? Old
age and the Infirmities which
accompany it, do they not
render us insupportable to
others and to our selves ?
Consider an old man over-
whelm'd with years, his spi-
rits dejected, his Body ex-
tenuated, his face full of
wrinkles, his eyes half shut
up, his voyce trembling,
his head hanging down to-
wards the Earth, as it were
seeking for a Sepulchre
wherein to be buried : Is
not this a kind of Monster
in

*S. Chry.
Jost.*

in nature ? But that which is here more monstrous in him, is the desire to live in despite of so many incommodities, and to trail along his Soul captivated and burthened with such heavy chains. Strange blindness of man ! This passion is more violent in the very caducity and feebleness it self, than in the most tender youthfulness. Whatever tye a man advanced in age hath for his dignities and for his treasures, he would willingly destrip himself of all to prolong his Life for some years ; and he would employ these years in acquiring other honours and other riches, of which he should distrip

descrip himself. Madd
man ! Weak Worm of the *S. Chry-*
Earth ! Refuse of the Uni *sof.*
verse ! Learn that in so de-
plorable an estate thou hast
nothing more to desire but
Death, nor any thing to
hope for but the Resurrecti-
on !

An Engraver hath made *Serm. 29.*
a fair Statue ; he finds it *in verba.*
afterwards to be eaten with *De tormi-*
Rust, and spoiled by the *entibus.*
injury of time. The love he
hath for his own work,
moves him to take compas-
sion on it ; he breaks it in
pieces, casts the mettall into
the fire, and frames a Figure
fairer then the former. This
is that which God did, ha-
ving seen that Man who
was.

S. Chry.
fost.

was his Image and his Head-
work was disfigured by Sin.
By what right and upon what
account, O thou ungrateful
and insolent creature, thou
unfortunate work of the
hand of the Almighty, thou
kneaded vessel of clay; by
what right dardest thou mur-
mure against the God who
created thee; since instead of
this gross form which is
subject to corruption, he
will give thee another per-
fect and incorruptible? Our
Lord, says the Prophet, hath
commanded me to go down in-
to the house of the Potter. I
found him turning a Vessel up-
on the wheel; but the work
was spoiled as soon as it was
out of the hands of the work-
man.

of Death.

111

man : he broke it in pieces,
and made another as himself ^{S. Chry-}
pleased. And shall not I have soft.

the same power as hath this
Artist ? And the people of Is-
rael, are they not in my hands
as the Clay is in the hands of
the Potter ? O man, what art
thou, adds the Apostle, who
darest dispute against God ? ^{Rom. 9. 20.}

The Work, can it say to the
Workman who formed it, Why
have you made me so ? Let us
therefore thank him for the
Life he hath given us, pe-
rishable as it is, since 'tis the
first favour we have recei-
ved from his Bounty. But let
us look upon it as perishable,
and let's demand of him a
holy Death, as the happy
passage to that immortal Life
which

The Holy Desires

S. Chry-
lost. which he hath promised
us.

Article XIV.

3. Instruction of St. Chry-
lostom : That Death is that
which most humbles man :
and That Humility being the
foundation of all the Virtues,
it follows that to be virtuous
we must incessantly meditate
on Death, talk of it at all
times, familiarise our selves
with it, visit Sepulchers,
and assist dying persons :
because nothing doth more
edify and comfort than to
see the Saints die : and no-
thing more deterrs from im-
piety, than to see the wicked die.
Whether

S. Chrys.

sof.

In c. 5. Genes. hom.

67.

Ser. de fide & lege nat.

WHether Man labours
to acquire Glory, or
to raise himself into Digni-
ties, or to heap up Riches;
nothing doth so much hum-
ble him and makes him bet-
ter to resent the vanity of
all these things than Death.
A Conquerour who makes
whole Provinces desolate,
and who breathes nothing
but Blood and Murder, may
in vain blind himself with a
fond passion of rendring his
reputation immortal: if
Death which he brings into
all places hath spared him
for some time, yet he is no
less sure to die, and to see
the course of his conquests
cut off by the same lot by
which

*S. Chry-
sost.*

which he hath made thousands perish before his eyes. What avails it to this Magistrate, to this Minister of State, to this Favorit, to have a troop of adorers attending him, to have honour given him; and to hear himself praised to the skies? 'Tis in vain for Flatterers to endeavour to raise up their birth by alotting to them Ancestours they never had; 'Tis frivolous to labour to justify their conduct, which the Publick condemns; and to predict to them a long Prosperity, which so many accidents can overturn: Death, the faithfull councellour of those people to whom none dares speak

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speak truth, presents it self
unto them at every hour, in ^{S. Chry-}
publick, in private, in the ^{st.}
height of their employments,
and even amidst their plea-
sures; but in a shape much
more terrible than it appears
to ordinary persons; and
reads to them this affrighting
Lesson: *Remember Man, that
thou art made of Earth, and
that thou art to return to Earth.
I have there laid all thy Prede-
cessours: Know that had not
God commanded me to leave
thee hitherto in the World to
exercise the Good and to punish
the Wicked, 'tis long since that
the horror of thy crimes would
have obliged me to take thee
from off the face of Earth.
The Rich and the Covetous
are*

S. Chrys-
ost.

are no more exempt from these threats, than the Ambitious ; and altho' they are perpetually taken up with the care of keeping their treasures, they cease not to hear the voyce of Death, which secretly whispers in
Luc. 12. 20. their Ears : To morrow I will fetch back thy Soul. All thou hast been heaping up so many years, shall be dissipated in the space of Six Months by thy Heirs : Law-suits shall consume one part ; Riot shall swallow up the other part : and among all thy Successours, not one shall be found who will so much as remember to pray for thee. Thus it is that the very wicked receive instructions from Death, and that they learn
of

of it to humble themselves
in the enjoyment of their
false Goods ; to which they
would adhere yet more than
they do, if they were not
averted by these wholsom
advertisements.

S. Chry-
sost.

But this Lesson hath never
more force than in the mouth
of dying persons. Certainly,
there's nothing more edifies
a Christian and affords him
greater comfort, than to see
a man breath forth well his
last breath, in producing
acts of Piety, of Love, and
of Confidence towards God.
The tranquillity which ap-
pears in his countenance, is
an effect of the quiet of his
Conscience. The Charities
which he hath exercised, the
services

*S. Chry-
sost.*

services which he hath rendered to the poor, the Pardon which he hath granted to his Enemies, his Watchings, his Fastings, his Mortifications, and finally all his good works, are as so many Angel-Gardians encompassing his Soul, to defend her against the assaults of the Devil. In this estate he explicates his last will without any trouble of Spirit; he comforts and instructs them who assist him; he demands of them to joyn their Prayers with his; and after the tender embraces of the Cross of his Redeemer, he renders up his Soul upon that adorable instrument of his dear Saviours Passion;

Passion ; his Life is extinguished as a Light which hath no more nourishment ;

S. Chrysostom.
soft.

his beautiful Soul fly's to Heaven, and his Eyes are closed with that peaceable Sleep of the Just, which doth not separate the Soul from the Body, but to reunite them one day in Eternity. What Christian well perswaded of the truth of his Religion, would not desire to die in this manner ; and would not avouch that this Death is more desirable a thousand times than Life ?

The Death of the Wicked is a far different Lesson ; but which doth no less instruct them who know how to make their profit of it.

One

S. Chrys.
Sost.

Prov. i.

One may there observe visible signes of Gods anger, a terrible effect of thole celebrious Words of the Scripture: *You who have had no other Gods but your own passions, and who have contemned my Counsells and my Chastisements, wicked wretches, I will render speedily unto you with usurie the taunting scoffs which you have darted against me. When you shall be in the arms of Death, I will abandon you to despair and to fury. I will no otherwise look upon you than with disdain, and I will take pleasure to insult over your misery with a mocking laughter.* In effect, those Atheists who braved Death when they conceived it to be far from

from them, are a thousand times more weak than others, when it is near at their dores.

The remorse of their Crimes begins to gnaw their Hearts, and yet their Ears are shut against all holy instructions. They listen to nothing but what is said concerning their Sickness; they complain of the insufficiency of the Remedies, and quarrell with all that come near them; their Eyes are wandering and sparkling with rage; and their Mouth even yet vomits forth Blasphemies.

In this fearful estate all the world leaves them; their House falls to the pillage of their Heyrs or of their Domesticks; nothing is look'd

G

after

S. Chrysostom. after but to secure their Goods, and to preserve their Offices and their Dignities, whilst their Soul is abandon'd for a Prey to the Devil; And very frequently, of all the Riches they possessed upon Earth, there is scarcely found enough to bury them after their Death.

Article X V.

4. *Instruction of St. John Chrysostom: That we ought to have as great a joy to go forth of the World, as Criminals have to get forth of Prison, when the news is brought them of the Princes favour.*

We

WE are to put our selves ^{S. Chrys.}
 in an estate to be ready ^{soft,}
 to open the Dore to Christ
 Jesus at the first knock he
 gives at it. For besides that
 our Resistance would be boot-
 less against him who hath
 broken Hell-gates in pieces;
 our long delay in obeying,
 will make us lose the advan-
 tage which we may derive
 from our Death. But to the
 end we may avoid this Evil
 we need only to represent fre-
 quently to our selves, That
 we are in this World as Pri-
 soners who expect every
 hour the grace of the Prince
 to be releas'd out of their
 Prison. *For we have not re* Rom. 8
ceiv'd the spirit of servitude,

S. Chrysostom.
1st.

2 Tim. 1.

Job. 7. 12.

but we have receiv'd the Spirit of adoption of the Children of God, by which we cry, my Father, my Father. Let us then say to him with Job, not with a Spirit of Fear, but of Confidence and of Courage, of Love and Wisdom: Lord, is it not long enough that my Soul languishes in the chains which keep it fettered? Is it an untamable Monster? Is it as furious as the Sea, that you should shut it up in so strait a Prison? On the contrary, 'tis your Image; you have created it free; you have ransom'd it from the bondage of Sin, you have adopted her; you have promis'd her your Kingdom; why delay you then to give it her?

her? Are you not weary to hear us sigh and sobb within our selves, in expectation of the Divine Adoption, which is to be the Redemption and the Deliverance of our Bodies? S. Chrys. 1st. Rom. 8.

In effect, we who are Brethren of Christ Jesus, and designed to reign with him, shall we be so remiss as to prefer our chains before the Crown which he hath prepared for us? Yet I much fear that there are many of these remiss Christians who are so fast fetter'd to Life, that they have none but base and servile Inclinations. The sacred Scripture assures us, Eccle. 42 that there are some who shall go forth of the Dungeon to ascend to the Throne; Sap. 182

S. Chry-
sost.

and others who shall pass from their Prison into another more obscure. They are the Children of darkness, they are blind, and they are senseless wretches, unworthy ever to enjoy the Light. Is't not they whom the Prophet *Iſay* threatens when he pronounces these terrible Words: *The Sepulcher shall not be for you a place of rest, nor an inviolable Sanctuary. You shall one day be drawn forth of it, as they fall from the Earth the trunk of an useless Tree. You shall be confounded with them whom the Sword of our Lord hath exterminated, and who shall be cast into the depth of the Abyſmus, as rotten carcases.* Rouse up your self

Self then, O Christian, to
get forth of your Captivi-
ty ; as a Criminal assured
of his pardon, runs at the
first noyse he hears, to lay
hold of the good news. This
Impatience which you shall
testify to go towards God,
will much contribute to-
wards the obtaining pardon
for your Sins ; and will
keep you evermore disposed
to go to render him an ac-
count : to the end that
Death, which steals upon you
as a Thief, may never surprize
you.

We
G 4 Article

S. Chry-

lost.

Article X V L

5. *Instruction of St. Chry-*
lostom: That if we lived
as true Christians, without
tying our selves to the plea-
sures of the Earth; if we
embraced the Cross of Christ
Jesus by renouncing all the
Wantonnesses and Delica-
cies of the World; we
should finde no difficulty to
conceive, That Death is of
all Good things the most de-
sirable.

Hom. ad

pop. An-

2. 6.

WE live not, my dear-
 est Brethren, we live
 not with an austerity wor-
 thy the name of Christian.
 We

We love with excess this
 soft and delicious Life; and *S. Chrys.*
 'tis by so bad a disposition *soft.*
 that our Heart becoms more
 and more insensible of the
 holy desires of Death. But
 if we passed our days in
 Fasting, in Watching, and
 in a voluntary Abstinence
 from a thousand frivolous
 and dangerous things; if
 we took care to curb the
 violence of our Passions, to
 exercise our selves in the
 laborious ways of Virtue,
 to treat our Body hardly, and *I Cor. 9.*
 to bring it into subjection, as
 the Apostle speaks: we
 should not be perplexed
 with all the vain disquiets
 which self-love brings up-
 on us, nor should we any

G. 5. longer

*S. Chry-
sost.*

longer obey its irregular motions. Finally, if we walked in the narrow and painfull way which the Gospel shews us, we should have such an impatience to get to the end of the course, that we should never stay upon the fond amusements of the World; and nothing would more lively touch us than the desire to finish such a dangerous journey. *The Champions observe in all things so exact a temperance, and yet 'tis but to gain a corruptible Crown, whereas we labour to deserve an incorruptible one. Let us run therefore in such sort as that we may winn the Prize. Let's disengage our selves from the fetters*

ters of Sin, which so straitly
 bind us, and let's run with ^{S. Chry. 2}
 patience, that I may make ^{1st. 101}
 use of the same Apostles
 terms, in this carriere which ^{Heb. 12}
 is opened unto us. Let us fix
 our Eyes upon Jesus, the be-
 ginner and finisher of our Faith,
 who in stead of a quiet and
 happy Life which he might ^{Rom. 8}
 have enjoyed in the World, ^{Ephes. 4}
 loaded himself with shame and
 with contempt, and endured
 the torment of the Cross, not ^{Col. 1}
 staying upon the Earth but to
 shew us the way which leads to
 Heaven.

Will you moreover see
 lively examples, and behold
 with your own Eyes the
 truth of my Words?
 Take a turn into the De-
 sert.

S. Chrys. 2
Sof. 101

Hym. 14
Epist. 1
Zeph. 1

seat, and there from the tops
of the mountains, contain
place, these Solitary Men,
who pass the days and the
nights in continual Morti-
fications, and who volunta-
rily shut up themselves in
those dismal Crotts, only
to cut off all commerce of
all the rest of the creatures.
You shall not finde any one
there, who fights not in-
cessantly with an impatience
to die, because they well
know that the end of their
Life is the end of their Mi-
series. As they have nothing
to fear upon Earth, and as
they possess nothing but
their Soul and their Body,
so they look upon Death as
an advantage which puts
them

them in possession of Christ
 Jesus. When they under- *S. Chrys. 2*
 stand that some one among *sof. 101*
 them is dead, there's a uni-
 versal Joy amongst them
 all: No one daring to say,
~~Such a one is Dead:~~ but they
 all say, ~~Such a one hath fi-~~
 nished his Course. At this
 happy tidings they chaunt
 forth Canicles of Joy to
 the praise of God, humbly
 demanding of him for them-
 selves the grace of a speedy
 and holy Death. In effect,
 as the Gladiatours have an
 extreme desire to get forth
 of the Theatre where they
 are perpetually expos'd to
 new Wounds: so they who
 lead an austere Life, and
 see themselves perpetually
 expos'd

S. Chry. 2
fo. 101

expos'd to the Temptations
of Sin, burn with a desire
to put an end to their com-
bats, and to be delivered
from the labours of this
miserable Life, in order to
enjoy a repose which shall
never be interrupted.

Article XVII.

6. *Instruction of St. John Chrysostom* That the Death of Christ Jesus bought us to have cured us of the dread of Death: and that the Ceremonies of the Church in the Funerals of the Faithful should afford us Comfort and Joy, both for them and for our selves.

St.

ST. Paul says, *That before* S. Chry-
soft.
the birth of Christ Jesus Hom. 4. in
Ep. ad Heb
Death reigned in the whole c. 2.
Univers, and that its Empire
was extended over all the Na- Rom. 14
tions of the Earth : Then
 Man began not to live but
 to Die, without passing to
 a better Life. But the Sa-
 viour of the World hath tri-
 umphed over Death by dy-
 ing ; he hath destroyed its
 Tyranny even to the gates
 of Hell ; and those ghastly
 places to which it fled, have
 acknowledged the power of
 our Deliverer. In so much
 as after his Passion and his
 Resurrection, one cannot be
 his Disciple without loving
 Death, as he loved it. Thus
 my

my Brethren, strength-
 ned by his Example, we
 have no longer any cause
 to trouble our selves when
 we think of that last hour,
 and we should do amiss
 to make now such com-
 plaints as our forefathers did
 before the coming of our
 Redeemer.

Job. 14.

What do we see up-
 on Earth, sayd Job, more
 wretched than Man, He is
 born of a Woman amidst
 pains, he lives a short time
 and suffers much; his best
 days pass away as a shadow,
 and he never remains con-
 stant in the same estate,
 Were it not better for him,
 never to have been? At least,
 there remains some hope in
 the

the Wood when 'tis cut
down; the Stem thereof *S. Cbr*
buds forth afresh, and its *soft.*
Branches becom more thick
and green than before: But
as for Man, when the Woof
of his life is once broken off,
'tis for evermore. He comes
naked forth of his Mothers
womb, and he shall return
naked into the womb of the
Earth. What remains
there of man when he hath
served for food to the
Worms? Could he not be-
hold the Light, but upon
this hard condition, that he
must in a moment after be
plunged in the darkness of
the Tomb?

Behold what was the lang-
uage of men before the coming
of

S. Chry.
Sof.

Of. 23.

Mat. 12.

2 Cor. 15.

Isa. 25.

of the Meſſias. But Chriſt Jeſus hath viſited us in theſe darkneſſes : he hath drawn us forth of this ſhadow of Death wherewith we were encompassed : he hath cauſ'd our Life to ſpring from our Death : he hath open'd us a paſſage to Eternity, by paſſing himſelf firſt by a Death ignominious in appearance, but in effect glorious. Thus, he fought Death with its own weapons, he hath pull'd out its ſting, he hath deſtroy'd it by it ſelf : he hath ſubdued the Prince of Death, and finally he hath caſt it headlong into an eternal Abyſſus : and by this Victory he hath wiped off the Tears, and raiſed the diſgrace of his people

ple from the face of the Earth.

Let us not, my Brethren, ^{S. Chry-}
lose the advantage which ^{soft.}
he hath given us over Death:

Let us have no horreur of
a thing which God hath
rendred to usefull and so
glorious unto us. *We who*

possess the first fruits of the
Spirit with hope to be delive-
red from this subjection to cor-
ruption, and to be made par-
takers of the glory and of the
liberty of the Children of God.

Let us remain firm in Faith,
let us generously brave
Death: If we look on it
with Eyes of Faith, we shall
finde nothing in it that is
terrible; but on the con-
trary it will appear to us
sweet and agreeable; and in
the

Rom. 8.

*S. Chry-
sost.*

the end we shall grow familiar with it. But we must look upon it at all times, and be acquainted with it, if we will find it pleasing unto us. We must love it and desire it, by the example of our dear Master, who loved it for our sakes.

When I behold on one side to what degree of honour Christ Jesus hath raised us, and on the other side when I consider to what lownesse we debase ourselves, I am altogether confounded at our remifness and negligence. I see many among Christians who fear Death, not only for themselves, but for their Freinds. This weakness is so visible among

among us, and even among
persons who seem to have *S. Chry*
much piety, that the Pa-*soft.*
gans publickly mock at it.
For, say they, if the Chri-
stians believe in God whom
they adore, why fear they
to see him? and if they
love him, what induces
them to shun the only thing
which according to their
own doctrine, must unite
them eternally unto him?

'Tis certainly to give occa-
sion to the wicked, to esteem
all that we say of the eternall
Goods, and of the Resurrec-
tion of the Dead, to be meer
Fables. They less regard what
we preach, than what we
do. You destroy by your ac-
tions, what we endeavour
to

S. Chrysostom.
1st.

Philip. 1.
21.

to establish by our discourses; for they judge rather of the Religion of Christ Jesus by your Life, than by our Instructions. In effect, all the frights which you make appear, shew plainly that you have little confidence in the Word of God. When the Apostle S. Paul says; *I desire to die, and to be united to Christ Jesus*, he teaches us what should be the continual desire of all true Christians. Thus when you testify so great an apprehension of Death, you make known to the whole world, that your Faith is feeble and languishing; we see that you fear to obtain that which you cannot demand with too much ardour;

ardour ; and that instead of
 practising the precepts which you ^{S. Chry-}
 have heard, your Heart resem- ^{soft.}
 bles those half-open Vessels ^{Heb. 1.}
 which let out all one pours into
 them.

For the rest, I bleſs God
 for that he will have his
 Church make use in the Fu-
 nerals of the Dead, of such
 holy and august Ceremonies
 as condemn your remiſneſs,
 and which convince you of
 your little Faith. For why
 think you do we there ſing
 Hymns and Pſalms, and ſet
 up lighted Cierges and Tor-
 ches, but to teach you to
 look upon your Brethren,
 whiſt we are burying them,
 as upon victorious Champi-
 ons, whom we ought to ac-
 company

*S. Chry-
Jost.*

company with honour and
with pomp in their triumph?
What truer subject of Joy
can we have for them, than
to be the witnesses of their
liberty and of their victory?
What have we else to do
or say, but bless God for
having call'd them to him-
self, and for having crown'd
his own Gifts in them by
a happy Death? Do we not
thereby testify the acknow-
ledgment of this favour, by
Words the most holy that
can be found in the Scrip-
ture? Finally, is it not for
this reason that we cause our
Churches to eccho forth
Canticles of prayse and of
jubilation? Surely there is
nothing in all the Ceremo-
nies

nies which invite you not to a holy alacrity. For as *S. Chrysostom* Ecclesiasticus says, *Singing accords not with tears and lamentation.* Eccle. 91.

Believe me, my Brethren, do not look upon Death as a frightfull thing. For if you are solidly Christians, if you are perswaded that there is another Life, if you believe the Resurrection of the Dead ; you will easily comfort your selves in the loss of your Freinds, and you will wish that your selves may soon pass forth of this Life so full of dangers and of myseries, where one doth nothing but suffer and Sin. *Do not therefore any longer dishonour your name by*

H

such

S. Chry.
fost.

such shamefull weakneses : but
acting as faithfull Ministers of
God, render your selves re-
commendable by a great Pati-
ence in Evil; and by a coura-
gious Contempt of Death; be
as if you were always dying al-
though yet living; as sad, and
yet always joyfull; as poor, and
yet possessing all in the possession
of God, who is promised unto you.

Article XVIII.

An Exhortation of St. John
Chrysostom; where he
speaks against remiss and im-
perfect Christians who dread
Death: and instructs couragi-
ous and perfect Christians to
desire it.

You

YOU who make profession *S. Chrysostom.*
 to believe in Christ Je- *soft.*
 sus, can you love the sweets *Serm. de non timenda morte.*
 of this Life? Can you *c. 24.*
 dread the bitterness of *Hom. 4 in Ep. ad Heb.*
 Death? O you remiss and
 faithless Christians! have
 you forgotten the example
 of Christ Jesus our good
 Master, and do you doubt
 whether you must die as he
 did? The true Christians
 have made themselves al-
 ways known by the holy
 desires of Death; but they
 have not acquired this ge-
 nerous disposition by any
 other means than by un-
 shackling themselves from
 all the Goods of the Earth.
 When one hath once with

*S. Chry-
sost.*

a sincere heart renounced them, Life is a small matter; and one will consider it rather as a punishment, than as a pleasure. Tis therefore for this unfettering of the Heart that we must labour, and 'tis that wherein consists the perfection of a Christian: For as for Death, besides that it is unavoydable, it is to be desired by them who have never so little Faith: and although at first it is repugnant to Nature, yet Grace overcomes by little and little that repugnancy; and makes us love at last that which before gave us a horroure. Hear what the Apostle St. Paul, says: *You who are en-rolled*

*1. Et 2.
ad Co-
rinth.*

rolled in the sacred warfare of Christ Jesus; ought to have no other care than to stand to your Arms, and to fight upon all occasions. A Soldier doth not involve himself in the employs of the Civil life, to the end he may be wholly embused in satisfying him who hath enrolled him. Now the Warfare of Christ Jesus, is to endure constantly Watchings, Fastings, Poverty, Injuries, Imprisonment, Wounds, and Death it self, for the glory of his holy Name.

'Tis true, that the Christian Moral appear's at the first view too severe to sensual men: but if one examin's it with a Spirit untied from the secret interest of self love and of Concupiscence:

S. Chry-
fest.

piscence ; one finds nothing so reasonable and so advantageous to the common good of all men, nor even so profitable to particular persons, whether it be for their conduct or for their comfort. In effect, what Religion is there in the world which proposes a more perfect Model than Christ Jesus, whose Life is more pure, whose Miracles are more evident, and whose Doctrine is more wise and more disinterested? Do but compare it with that of the most prudent Philosophers, and of the most renowned Law-makers ; and you will finde that in all the Words and in all the Actions of Christ Jesus there is

a Character of Sanctity and of Divinity, which his Enemies themselves cannot chuse but acknowledge; whereas in the other Doctrines, human Wisdom is always interwoven with some extravagancy, with some gross interest, with some contradiction, or with some error.

Since therefore we make profession to follow the Lessons of so good a Master; let us endeavour, O Christians, to imitate him in all things. Let's leave Sensualists to enjoy their Sensuality: this enjoyment is so small a matter, and lasts so short a time, that we ought more to pity than to envy them.

S. Chrysostom.

Let's leave the World to reign ; 'tis here it's Kingdom, ours is not yet come. What hath our Joy common with the Joy of the Earth? The World will lament whilst we laugh, and we shall one day mock at it's tears, as it this day mocks at ours. The difference there is between it and us, is, That it being in our own power to rejoyce as it doth, we do it not, because we acknowledg the vanity of all its pleasures : but it cannot enjoy the pleasures of Eternity, because it hath despised them : on the contrary it shall be plunged in dreadfull darkness, where pains and gnashings of teeth shall never end, but

but shall be the continuing
signes of its sufferings and *S. Chrysostom*
of its despair. Let us weep *soft.*
then, my Brethren, let's
weep whilst the World re-
joyces; let's weep for its
being in joy, because Chari-
ty so ordains; and let us be
so far from loving Life as
the World doth, as to run
to Death which it loves not;
because Death is not unhap-
py for us as it is for it: but
on the contrary it will end
all our unhappineses. *In the*
Evening we are *drowed in* *Psalm 29*
tears, and in the Morning we
shall be in an eternal joy.

Let us never forget, That
our true pleasure ought to
be to despise all vain plea-
sures: and that our solid
H 5 happiness

*S. Chry-
sost.*

happinefs is to believe there
is none folid but with God.
Ah, Christian, if thou con-
fiderest thy condition as thou
oughtest, how wilt thou
dare to complain of living
without pleasure, thou who
art obliged to die with plea-
sure?

Article XLIX.

*As St. Jerome is one of the
Doctours of the Church, who
hath testified the greatest de-
fire of Death; so we have
few Ecclesiastical Authours
who have spoken so clearly as
he, either of the Advanta-
ges which Death brings to
Christians, or of the obliga-
tion*

tion they have to prepare themselves for it, and continually to think of it. Behold in what manner this great Saint explicates himself concerning it, in several places of his Writings.

S. Jerome

THe greatest mark of an irregular Life, is never to think of Death: and when we think but seldom of it, 'tis a certain Sign that we have yet but very little Virtue and Piety. As Death is the end at which all men must arrive, so the thought of Death is a faithful guide to conduct us with safety unto it. For the Scripture hath sayd, That if we remember the last days of our Life,

Epist. ad
Prin. ad

Euriam. ad

Paulinum

Galibi.

Eccles. 7.

me

S. Jerom. we shall never Sin. Surely then we run an hazard to sin often, if we do not think that we must die. We fall into the same misfortune as do those Travellers whom the night hath surprized in a Forrest, and who have strayed out of their way. Every one of hem takes a several track, and the farther they go the more they swerve from the right path. Christ Jesus hath shew'd us the way: He hath said, *I am the Way and the Truth*. His Light conducts us amidst the darkness; his Voyce calls us. He serves us for a guide, but 'tis by the pathway of sufferings, and by the track of *Calvary* that he leads us: and all they who

who will follow him, must
as he did, carry their Cross, *S. Jerom.*
and prepare themselves to
die.

This different disposition
which men have in regard
of Death, is the most visi-
ble Character of their pre-
destination or of their repro-
bation. And 'tis that which
Christ Jesus hath shew'd us
in the Parable of the Vir-
gins. For he says that those
five foolish Virgins did not
enter to the Marriage of the
Bridegroom, because they
had not put themselves in a
readiness to receive him :
How can one explicate these
marriages and this prepara-
tion, but of the Joy of a
Christian Death, and of the
blessed holy

S. Jerom

holy disposition which one ought to have for it? He teaches us at the same time, that the five Wise Virgins being totally replenished with these holy thoughts, deserv'd to have room in the house of the Bridegroom, and there to celebrate the Marriage-feast, the joy whereof shall last for all Eternity,

He who would not do good when he could have done it, shall be justly punished with an impotency of doing it when he would do it. He who would not think of Death during his Life-time, shall not be able to think of the true Life at the hour of Death.

viod

And

And what doth it avail a man
 to avoid the remembrance *S. Jerom.*
 of an Evil which he can-
 not shun, and to love that
 which he is not sure to pos-
 sess one moment? What
 doth it avail him to adhere
 to a life which flies from
 him, and to fly from Death
 which seeks after him?
 Man, says the Psalmist, spins *Psal. 38.*
 his days, as the Spider spins her
 Web. After many turns and *Isai. 59.*
 returns, wherein he con-
 sumes himself with his own
 labour, Death comes, which
 ruins all his work; and then
 it appears not so much as that
 he ever was.

Article

S. Jerom.

Article XX.

St. Jerome teaches us the temper
we ought to keep in the dis-
gust of Life, and in the de-
sire of Death.

We have added this passage for
the Comfort of good people,
who naturally fear Death.

In Amos
c. 6. et alibi.

Nothing is more ordina-
ry to man, than to be
cast down in afflictions, to
be weary of living, and to
wish to die. But all they
who find themselves in this
disposition, do they believe
that they are for this more
perfect than others? On the
contrary,

contrary ; they ought to be
asham'd of it, as of a defect *S. Jeram.*
of Faith and a want of Cou-
rage. Not but that Life is
despicable, and that it is e-
ven meritorious to contemn
it ; but that we should be
so far from conceiving a
disgust of it when it is full
of afflictions, as that we
ought then chiefly to che-
rish it as a means given us
by God to do penance. If
Death is to be desired, 'tis
in a delicious Life, where
sometimes our condition ex-
poses us to sin, as it were,
against our will ; 'tis in a
long prosperity where we
may have just cause to sigh
for passing our life unprofi-
tably, and perhaps crimi-
nally.

S. Jerom.

1 Cor. 12.

nally upon Earth, and for
vainly spending the preci-
ous time which is only lent
us to merit Heaven by our
sufferings. For my part
says the Apostle St. Paul, If
it is permitted to boast, I vent
that I glory of my pains and of
my afflictions, to the end that
the power of Christ Jesus may
dwell in me. I feel a satisfacti-
on and a joy in my Infirmities,
in Injuries, in Poverty, in
Persecutions, in the pressing
Adversities which I suffer for
my Saviour: and when I am
weak, 'tis then that I find my
self most strong. The contempt
therefore of Life is not al-
ways a certain mark of our
Faith and of our Piety; 'tis
sometimes a weariness of
suffering

S. Jerom.

suffering for God, sometimes
a sadness which the austerity
of devotion casts into the
Heart; we are alham'd to
leave it, and we want cou-
rage to persevere in it. If
the Soul is not supported by
an extraordinary Grace, the
disgust of all things and e-
ven of Piety it self which
is insinuated by little and
little, and the Imagination
which black's it self by dis-
mal thoughts and by desires
of dying, brings her to the
brinks of Despair. Those
persons who have lately se-
questred themselves from the
World, are more exposed
to this misery than others;
untill the Divine love hath
fill'd up all that emptiness
which

S. Jerom.

which the separation left
in their Spirit. For what-
ever endeavour these per-
sons use, Nature never en-
dures the yoke of Grace
without violence ; 'tis in
vain to tame this Nature by
the continuall exercises of
piety, by mortifications, by
rigorous penances ; for that
inward Law of the Body e-
vermore resists the law of the
Spirit ; and in the combat
which is fought between
them, although the Spirit
gets the victory, yet it is
sometimes weakned, and
foyled in its own conquests.
Then we would die, because
we find no more pleasure in
living : and in these sad de-
sires 'tis Nature which acts
and

and not Grace; Nature is willing to discharge herself of Life, as of a Burthen which is to her insupportable. Always to fight, says she, always to languish, always to suffer! Ah; is it not something worse than to be dead?

I know it by my own experience, Brethren, and if it may be permitted me to glory in my infirmities, and to make use of the terms of the Apostle, I would tell you what I have done to quell these revolts and these impatiencies of Nature. Finding that the memory of the divertisements of my youth followed me every where as my shadow, and troubled

S. Jerom

Eusebius,

of the Death of S. Jerome; relating his own Words.

S. Jerom.

troubled my most innocent
 occupations ; I shut up my
 self in a dismal Grot amidst
 the vast Deserts of *Siria*
 where the Rocks scorched
 with the ardours of the Sun
 furnish'd our Solitary Her-
 mits with places of retreat,
 which are common to them
 with the Savage Beasts. I con-
 fess that I could not enter
 there without horror, but
 the occasions of offending
 God appeared to me more
 horrible than that Solitude.
 Nevertheless in a dwelling
 so dreadful where I nourish-
 ed my self only with wild
 Roots, my Imagination in-
 genious to persecute me, ceas-
 ed not to entertain it self with
 the delights of the Roman
 Citty.

Citty. I pass'd the day in
sighing, and the night in
weeping for my Sins. But
the more I strove to quench
with my Tears the secret fire
of my Concupiscence, the
more that rebell was enkind-
led even in the marrow of
my bones. If sometimes the
wearinesses of my penance
forced me to abandon my
self to sleep; I paid not that
tribute to Nature but against
my will: and to free my self
quickly from it, I suffer'd
my body to fall to the
ground, it being extenuated
with watchings, and as it
were broken with all sorts
of macerations. I had no o-
ther Pillow than a Stone,
no other Garment then a
Hayr-

S. Jerom.

Hayr-cloath, no other Drink than Water, nor other Food than Herbs and Roots: and when the weakness of my Stomack obliged me to eat them boyled, for a more easy digestion; I durst not satisfy my hunger, fearing to commit an excess in making good cheer. This Abstinence and the heat of the Climat joyned to the ardour of my temper, had dryed me up like a Skeleton: and one might have counted all the Nerfs through a Skin more tawny than that of the *Ethiopians*. In this sad estate, I had more horreur of my self, than of the Scorpions and of the Serpents which were round about me; and yet

yet my Spirit would escape
on a sodain even amidst my *S. Jerom.*
most holy Meditations, and
quit Prayer to dream of the
Roman Dames, running
over all the assemblies I had
frequented formerly, where
the Devil had laid his mor-
tall Baits to entrap Chastity.
Then being irritated at the
revolt of my Senses which
these thoughts had excited
against me, I massacred my
breast with a thousand blows,
and I left not off striking it,
untill the Grace of our Lord
had calmed my Passions. He
knows what my sorrow was
after such strange Conflicts.
I blushed with shame. Life
was insupportable unto me.
All the corners of my Grot,
I all

Jerom.

all the Rocks of my Solitude, seem'd to me so many Censurers of my Life and so many Witnesses of my Weaknesses. For this cause I often chang'd my habitation, hoping to find out some one where I might have more quiet, but my evil did not change, because I bore every where about me the subject of my disquiet. I avouch that in the height of my torments I ardently desired to die, and that I could have wished it had been permitted me to go forth of the World. When one day I was press'd with this thought more violently than I was wont, I took up the Book of the sacred Scripture

ture which was my sweetest comfort, and as God would have it, I fell upon that passage where the Prophet *Amos* says these terrible Words: *Accursed be they* *Joel. 2. 13.* *who inconsiderately desire the day of our Lord. Who urges* *Soph. 1. 13.* *you thus to desire it? That day of our Lord is a day without Light, a day of darkness and* *Amos. 1. 18.* *obscurity. When you shall be weary of your misery, overwhelm'd with infirmities, persecuted with temptations, rejected by the injustices of others; when you shall be disgusted with the whole World; and irksom to your self; expect the hour of our Lord with patience. For what* *Amos. 7. 19.* *doth it avail a man to shun the*

*meeting of a Lion, if he falls
S. Jerom. into the paws of a Bear? It is
not in his power to hinder his
Soul from going forth when that
Eccl. 8. 8. hour shall be come; and he
hath no right to hasten or to
slacken the day of his Death.*

After this sacred Instru-
ction, I suffered Life pati-
ently, being resolv'd to em-
ploy all the moments there-
of in doing good works;
and being perswaded that
we may well desire Death,
but that it is not permitted
us to advance or further it,
nor even so much as to de-
mand it of God with over-
much impatience; because al-
though we ought to contemn
Life, yet we must not omit to
conserve it.

Article.

Article. XXI.

An Excellent Instruction of the same St. Jerome : That Death ought to be looked on as an order of the Divine Providence, rather than as an effect of human Infirmitie; and that so we ought to die by Obedience and by Love.

A True Christian looks upon Death not only as upon a subject of consolation, but moreover as upon an object of love and of respect; because it must be granted that it is God who makes us live and die when he pleases; and that the end

*Lib. 9. in
Isaiam; &
alibi.*

S. Iero m.

of our days is more an effect
of the Divine Will, than
of human infirmity. For if
the fall of the least Sparrows
happens not without the order
of God, as himself says in
the Gospell; we ought to
believe by a stronger reason,
That the last fall of our Bo-
dy never happens but accord-
ing to the immutable decree
of his Will. We should
therefore look on Death
with Love, considering it
as an effect of the eternal
Providence. We must take
from it that which Nature
finds horrible in it; and
think that God sends it not
to them whom he loves, but
to the end they should always
love him.

In.

In effect, the greatest testimony he can give them *S. Ierom.* of his love, is to withdraw them out of the World and to free them from the slavery of their Body and of Sin, to render them Saints and make them eternally happy. I say yet much more, we are in some sort made partakers even upon Earth of this happiness, when we submit to his will with this Confidence. And as the last mark we can give of our Love towards God, is to receive Death with an entire Obedience, and even with Joy, when it summons us to go forth of the World: so the most perfect act of our Faith and of our Piety

towards Christ Jesus, is to
S. Ierom. resign our selves before hand
to what ever God shall or-
dain of our Life and of our
Death. Let us therefore with
Pf. 89. David say to him : Behold
we are ready, O Lord , Cut
of the threed of our miserable
Life when you please. And
surely, what is the duration of
our days? They pass away more
speedily than the Word : We
live ordinarily but, Seaventy
Years, and the stronger scarce-
ly pass Fourscore. But should our
Life endure a Thousand years :
before your eyes, a Thousand
years are no more then yesterday
which is past and gone : Death
hurries them away as a Whirl-
wind, and they disappear as a
Dream. So that, how long so-
ever

ever our Life is, it will be counted for nothing, unless it is pleasing to you. Grant then, O Lord, that we may count our days by our Good Works, and that we may know their shortness, to the end we may acquire Wisdom of Heart.

St. Jerome.

Sap. 34.

Article XXII.

St. Jerome, or the Author of some Epistles attributed to him, which are placed at the end of his Works; urges this Doctrine yet farther, and teaches, That a Christian ought not only not to dread Death, but that he ought also to desire it and to love it if he will imitate Christ Jesus.

I 5.

Tis

S. Ierom. **T**Is a small matter not to dread Death, since Pagan Philosophers, who imagined they lost all in losing Life, were free from this fear. Is it a matter of more difficulty to overcome Death with the Christian Faith, than with the profane Philosophy?

Let us familiarize ourselves with this Bugbeare; it affrights only them, who dare not look near at hand upon it. But it suffices not to learn to die, when old Age or Diseases threaten us with Death. 'Tis in the flourishing years of Youth, and in the vigour of Health, that we should most seriously

ously apply our selves to this study. For who told us, *S. Ierom.* that we should have time enough to prepare our selves thereto? Since it's blows are unavoydable, let us resolve to endure them. So many Martyrs, so many Virgins have affronted it with courage, why shall we not imitate them? God doth not always demand these bloody Sacrifices: but as for the sacrifice of our Will, he demands it every hour; and I dare say that there is more merit to offer unto him our Life in all the moments wherein he conserves it unto us, than to lose it once by the cruelty of the Executioners.

Let

S. Ierom. Let us aspire yet to a greater Perfection, since we are Christians. Let us change our Dread into Desire, and our Aversion into Affection. We have the honour to be Heyrs to a Man-God, who hath changed the punishment of our Crime into a Sacrifice of Piety. Let us desire Death as he desired it : lets love Death, and lets seek it even between the arms of the Cross, as Christ Jesus there sought it : Lets render to him in dying the same Obedience which he rendred to his Eternal Father. Finally let us rejoyce to go to find our Master, since we are his Disciples. Let us depart with alacrity
to

to come to our Father, since *S. Ierom.*
we are his Children. For
if we have no love for him,
nor Desire to be near him,
we are supposititious Chil-
dren, Children of darkness;
unworthy to see the Light,
and to reign one day with
Christ Jesus.

Article XXIII.

*The order of time demands now
that we return to St. Au-
gustin : For besides the
Principles of Doctrine, upon
which we in the beginning
established the whole design
of this Treatise ; there are
moreover found in his Wri-
tings an infinity of pithy pas-
sages,*

S. Au-
gustin.

sages, where he repeats and
deeply prosecutes this matter.

*An Excellent Morall of St. Au-
gustin against them who fear
Temporal Death, and who do
not apprehend Eternal Death.*

Tract 49.
in Joan.

Epist. 45.
ad Arma-
mentari-
um.

ALL men are apprehen-
sive of the Death of the
Body ; but few there are
who fear the Death of the
Soul. All the World strives
to hinder that first from
seizing on them, which ne-
vertheless will infallibly one
day come upon him ; and
scarcely any one labours to
avoid that Death of the
Soul, which will no less in-
fallibly follow unless timely
prevented. Was there ever
any

any greater extravagancy than this? For the Death of the Body is but the shadow and the Image of the Death of the Soul. The Man who must necessarily die upon Earth, uses all his endeavours not to die there; and the same man who is designed to live eternally in Heaven, uses no diligence to render himself worthy of that happy Life. Thus, having a will to do that which he cannot, and having no will to do that which he ought, his endeavours are useless and criminal. When he attentively considers that Death is inevitable, he troubles and disquiets himself to retard it at least for some Months :

S. Aug.

Months : But why doth he not rather consider, that by leading a holy life, he would secure an infinite happiness, he would suffer no disquiet, and that he should die even with joy, because he might justly hope to live happily in Eternity ? We expose our selves dayly to contempt, to a thousand perplexities, and to all sorts of vexations, and even to the dangers of losing our Lives, in seeking out the means to conserve it. And this passion of living long, doth so strangely blind men, that they sometimes die with the sole-fear of dying. To fly from a furious Beast, they cast themselves headlong in-
to

to a River. To avoid a Shipwreck, they throw their *S. Aug.* Victuals into the Sea. Fear doth that in them which rashness could not do. An affrighted man knows no longer any danger. Such a one to escape the kind of Death which he dreaded, exposes himself to a thousand Deaths more terrible than that wherewith he was threatned.

What torments doth not the Iron and the Fire cause them to suffer, who put themselves into the Chirurgions hands? They endure to have a part of their Body cut off, to save the other. A man who loves his health, submits himself as a Slave to all that

S. Aug.

that the Physicians ordain him to do or suffer : and although he knows the vanity of their Art, he omits not to obey them in all things ; nor can his own experience, nor the uselessness of their applications, nor the uncertainty of their skill, undeceive him. This man more sick of Imagination than of any other Disease ; feeds himself with a false hope of being cured, try's all sorts of remedies, and hastens his Death by the Medicines which are given him to prolong a little while his Life. But the most horrible of all the effects which are caus'd by so blind and so irregular a passion, is, That
Men

Men to live a little longer, adventure sometimes to offend him mortally, who is the very Source of Life. For fearing to lose a Life which must necessarily end, they lose a life which must never end. And yet God commands us but few things, and those very easy, to deliver us from the true Death; which we nevertheless neglect to put in practise. We our selves only are to be blamed if we obtain not a Life which will eternally preserve it self without the help of men, and whereof our Enemies can never deprive us. But as for this death which we so much fear, we cannot possibly avoid it, and are most sure to suffer it, though

S. Aug. though never so much against our will.

Article XXIV.

A pithy reflection of St. Augustine, upon the shortness of this Life, and upon the Eternity of the other; to stir up Christians to unfetter themselves more and more from the Earth, and ardently to breath after Heaven.

*In Psal.
36. Sermon.
107. de
diversis.*

O Men, who are engaged in the course of this Life, and who prepare yourselves to end it well: do not bound your consideration only upon the places through which you must pass;

pass ; consider that place where you are to arrive. *S. Aug.*

You shall indeed suffer much in this journey, but you surely shall come at the end to an eternal rest. Cast your Eyes upon the recompense which is prepared for you, and you will look with contempt upon the miseries you endure on Earth. For if you compare the Evils you suffer, with the felicity which is promised you ; you will be astonished that such light and short pains, should procure you a happiness so great, and a felicity so infinite.

In effect, my Brethren, it seems that an exact Justice would require that one should

S. Aug.

should not purchase an Eternal repose, but by an Eternity of pains ; and it seems that you ought to labour and suffer without end, to enjoy a happiness which hath no end. But also on the other side, if your labour should have no end, how should you obtain an endless recompence ? It is therefore necessary that the pains should last but for a time ; to the end that they being ended, you may taste a pleasure which shall never end.

God might, without overmuch rigour, exact of us much longer pains, and much harder labours for the Eternity of pleasures which
he

he promises us. Yes, my Brethren, If our Labours *S. Aug.* and our Tribulations were to last many Ages ; If God should prolong our miseries for the space of a Thousand years : What are a Thousand years in regard of Eternity ? Is there any proportion between the Finit and the Infinit ? One cannot compare with Eternity either a Thousand years, or Ten-times an Hundred Thousand years, nor Millions of Millions of Ages, if we were designed to live all that time.

But that which should exceedingly comfort us, is, That God would not have our pains to be either long or extreme. Life is so short
that

S. Aug.

that it cannot make a man for any long time miserable : But what do I say, miserable ? I am sure, That if a Man is good, the interior joy and sweetness which God gives him, to tast of amidst the bitterness of this Life, do more touch him, than all his Pains and all his Afflictions.

Article XXV.

A most true and edificatory observation S. Augustin, That God by a particular mercy, besprinkles the greatest Sweets of this World with bitterness; and permits that his Elect should be afflicted with Diseases,

Diseases, with Contradictions,
and with Calumnies, thereby *S. Aug.*
to give them cause to con-
temn Life, and to desire
Death.

A Soul which hath not yet
a sufficient courage to *Tract. 6. in*
walk without weariness in *Joan.*
the way of Heaven; seeks
among the goods of the *In Ps. 83.*
Earth for some mitigation *& passim.*
of the pains which she meets
withall in her march. The
difficulty which this Soul
finds in keeping her self in
a continual disposition to
follow the Divine Inspirati-
ons, makes her to roam af-
ter that which she conceives
capable to untire her in her
labours. This is one of the
K nicest

S. Aug.

nicest temptations which persons of piety endure. But God who by a singular mercy never abandons his Servants and will unfetter them from this Life, frequently intermixes bitterness among those things which we esteem to be the most innocent. Why think you doth he sometimes render the Goods of the Earth so unfavoury, but to take from us the gust of them, and to make us desire the Goods of Heaven? And when God will exercise his Elect, and hinder them from dwelling upon any object which may divert them from their Salvation; he takes pleasure, if we may say so, in raising against them Afflictions

Afflictions both within and without, and in giving them occasions at every moment to merit new degrees of Glory, by new actions of Patience and of Love for Christ Jesus. S. Aug.

Perhaps should he less frequently send them Mortifications, their zeal would cool and relent: at least one may be assured that they would have less Merit. And it is a very particular favour of God, when he makes us employ profitably for the other Life, all the days of a Life so short as this is.

We see how they who walk faithfully in the narrow way of Heaven, are upon earth as the Grapes

S. Aug.

are under the Press, according to the thought of the Prophet. They crush the Grapes, they tread them under their feet, to draw from them a Juyce which serves for the Life of men : In like manner they oppress ; they persecute the Just in the World ; they are incessantly exposed to all sorts of injuries and miseries : but God so permits it , in order to draw from thence Good Works which serve for the perfection of the Christian, by disengaging him from all that is material and impure within him, to elevate him to that soverain honour which the World cannot give him.

Article

S. Aug.

Article XXVI.

St. Augustin teaches in many places of his Writings, as an assured Doctrine: That the most solid virtue of Christians, and the most visible character of the Predestinate, is to sigh continually in the expectation of Death, and in the hope of another Life.

It is not for this World, that you are Born and Regenerated in Christ Jesus: It is for Heaven. It is the Celestial Kingdom you are to seek for: The sorrow for being so long separated from so great a Good,

In Psalm.

53. 145.

247. 148.

Tract. 56.

in Joan.

&c.

Saying

is that which ought to cause
 all your Sighs and all your
 Tears. Interiour sighing is
 a gift of the Holy Ghost :
 When we are once enflam-
 ed with his Love, how shall
 we chuse but sigh and lan-
 guish in this our Banish-
 ment, knowing that we
 have no true Countrey but
 Heaven; and that this ex-
 ile which separates us from
 it, is the punishment of our
 Sin? Carnal Christians who
 breath nothing but the Goods
 and the Pleasures of the
 Earth, and who consent
 themselves with a vain and
 transitory Felicity, are af-
 flicted at the loss of Goods,
 at sicknesses, at Imprison-
 ments, at Banishments, at
 Shipwrecks,

Shipwrecks, at Calumnies. They sigh, but their sighing *S. Aug.* proceeds from their self love, and from the adhesion they have to earthly Goods. It is not the Holy Ghost, nor the love of Celestial Goods which causes their affliction; 'tis the sorrow for their losses which makes them lament. But Faithfull Souls, who aspire only to the soverain Good, who desire nothing but to be separated from the impurities of the Body, sigh in the most peaceable enjoyment of all perishable Goods; and 'tis the Holy Ghost that forms these Sighs in the bottom of their Heart, to the end they may be advertised by this interiour sadness, of

K. 4. the:

S. Aug.

the vanity of all worldly pleasures. He who looks upon them in this estate only with Carnal Eyes, is persuaded that a true Christian leads a very unhappy Life, and this error hath averted many from piety. But if they could comprehend the consolation which God mingles with these Sighs, the secret satisfaction which he spreads in the Soul of a good man, the peace, the pleasure, the joy which is tasted even amidst the tears poured forth in these transports of Divine Love; they would surely change their opinion. But certainly, Sensual Souls cannot penetrate into these Mysteries: they must have felt

felt these Celestial sweet-
 nesses who will rightly con-
 ceive them. Happy and holy
 Experience, how powerfull
 art thou upon Hearts! Di-
 vine transports of the Love
 of Christ Jesus! 'tis you
 which give a contempt of
 this Life; 'tis you which
 make Death to be desired;
 and you more perswade this
 truth in a moment, then
 can all the reasonings of hu-
 man Wit. *If once I am ray-*
sed above the earth, I will
draw all to myself, says Christ
 Jesus. But, Lord, whence
 comes it that you draw not
 all, and that it seems as if
 the fruit of your sacred
 Passion were imperfect?
 Ah! 'Tis because the weight

John. 12.
 32.

K. 5,

of

S. Aug. of our sins is yet stronger than the Adamant which draws us. 'Tis because we have not the courage to quit all that we have of terrestriall. For had we never so slender a disposition to bend our selves towards Heaven, thou O Lord, wouldst quickly draw us thither by the power of thy Grace. Give us, we beseech thee this disposition; and since it is impossible for man to raise himself above the Earth, but by the Cross which elevated thee upon Calvary, in the view of all Nations; Grant, O Saviour, that we may embrace this Cross with as much Gratitude for thy Bounties and Mercies,
as

as thou hast had Compassi-
on for our Miseries.

S. Aug.

Article XXVII.

*A Comparison between true
Christians and the faithfull
Israelites, in which St. Au-
gustin shews, That as the
first coming of the Messias
was the object of the conti-
nual Desires and Devotion
of the true Israelites, so the
second coming of Christ Je-
sus should be the scope of
the most solid Piety and of
the most fervent Desires of
Christians.*

The

S. Aug.
In Psal.
136. and
143.

Hom. 50.
Galibi.

THE Elect whom the Sacred Scripture names the Children of God, and the Reprobate whom it calls the Children of Men, or Children of the Earth, have lived after a very different manner. The Reprobate limit their hope to the present World, and expecting no other Felicity than that of this Life, embusy themselves in building Towns, and in establishing a permanent fortune upon Earth. *Cain*, the head of the Reprobate, first founded a City which he call'd by the name of his Son. *Nembroth* raised the Tower of *Babel*, and built *Babylon*. But we read no such thing

thing of the Children of God. It is not said that they built any Town, on the contrary they fled from Towns, they walked continually from place to place; and when by the order of God they stayd in any Countrey, they lodged under Tents in the open Fields, to avoyd the corruption of the World, which is a kind of contagious Disease gotten by commerce with one another. Such was the Life of *Abraham*, of *Isaac*, of *Jacob*, and of other holy Patriarchs. *Moses* lived in a like manner, in conducting the people of *Israel* in the Desert, after he had freed them from the Captivity of *Egypt*.

S. Aug.
1 Cor. 10.
Heb. 7. 8. 9.

Egypt. All the events of his passage, were (according to the thought of S. Paul) but a Figure of that which was to befall the Elect, who are the true Israelites chosen by God from all Eternity. Wherefore if we will be of this beloved troop whereof our Saviour speaks in the Gospel, we must not pass our Life in building Palaces, and in rayfing great fortunes upon Earth. Let us not imitate the ingratitude and Blindness of these *Hebrews*, who made to themselves Gods according to their own capricious brain, who repined at their servitude, and who upon every little incommodity hapning
in

in their Journey, murmur-
ed against their Conductour, S. *Aug.*
and prefer'd their slavery
of *Egypt* before all the goods
which he gave them hopes
of in the Land of Promise.
On the contrary, they who
were truly touched with the
desire of that dear Countrey,
endured with undanted cou-
rage all the difficulties of
their voyage, in hopes to
arrive one day at that place
of repose and plenty which
Moses promised them. But
so long as they remained
Captives, they ceased not
to sigh and weep upon the
banks of the *Babylonian Ri-*
ver; they hung their Harps
upon the branches of Trees;
and when they were entreat-
ed

S. Aug.
Psal. 136.

ed to sing Canticles of Mirth,
their answer was ; *Alas ?*
how can we sing being in a
strang Land ? Rather let our
Tongues be dried up, and all
the Strings of our Harps broken,
than that we should be induced
to sing in a place of tears and
lamentation.

Sion was but the Figure
of the Church, and the cap-
tivity of *Egypt* was but the
Image of the Tyranny of the
Devil. The true Israelites
knew well that they could
not enjoy an entire liberty
untill after the coming of
the Messias. Therefore it was
that they made so many
vows and Prayers to see the
arrival of that happy day,
foretold by all their Pro-
phets.

phets. And that Nation had evermore such ardent desires *S. Aug.* for the coming of their Redeemer; that even in their greatest blindness and when they crucified the true Messias, they still continued their Prayers, and demanded of God that he would send him to deliver his people. Let not us imitate these blind and self opinion'd Jews. Let us acknowledge Christ Jesus for our Deliverer. Let us courageously support the toyls of our Pilgrimage. Let us look upon the World as upon a Wilderness, through which we must pass with all sorts of pains and incommodities: and when we shall be ready to

S. Aug. to enter into our Celestial
 Country, let's Render
 Thanks to our Redeemer,
 for that after having deli-
 ver'd us from the bondage of
 the Devil, he hath more-
 over the Goodness to send
 us Death, to accomplish the
 breaking of our Fetters.

In Psal.
66.

Let us then, my Brethren,
 prepare our selves to meet the
 coming of our Saviours King-
 dom; for that it will come
 is most certain. It is, I say,
 most certain, that he who
 came once in an estate of con-
 tempt and of humiliation,
 will come another time in
 an estate of greatness and of
 Majesty. It is certain, that
 he who came to be judged
 by the World, will come

one.

one day to judge the World. Saying
 Let us now adore him in his
 humiliation, to the end we
 may not be affrighted one
 day by that terrible prepara-
 tion of greatness and of Ma-
 jesty, wherewith he will
 come to Judgement. If we
 love him whilst he hath yet
 his Arms stretched forth on
 the Cross, we may deserve
 to contemplate him in his
 Glory. He will divide his
 Kingdom with them who
 have sincerely desired that
 his Kingdom should come,
 and that his Will should be
 done. Why then desire we
 not to have it come? Why
 do we not accomplish his
 Will? His Will is no other
 than that of his Father who
 sent

sent him. Let us avouch
S. Aug. Christ Jesus before Men for
 our Master, if we will not
 have him to disavow us be-
 fore his Father for his true
 Childrens. But it is not e-
 nough for obtaining an en-
 trance into the Heavenly
 Kingdom, to say to him with
Mat. 7. 21. our Mouths, *Lord, Lord,* We
 must fulfill the Will of his
 Father, which is also his
 Will: *Now the Will. of my*
Father, says Christ Jesus, *is,*
that all they who see the Son,
and who believe in him, should
Job. 6. 40. *have Eternal Life, and I will*
raise them up at the last day.
 Let us then believe in him
 with our whole Heart, and
 let us look upon him for the
 present with Eyes of Faith
 and

and of Love, to the end we
 may behold him face to face *S. Isidor.*
 in a blessed Eternity.

Article XXVIII.

*An Instruction of St. Isidore
 of Damiet to all Christians,
 to excite them to a perfect
 desire of Death.*

SOME persons even the
 most pious persuade *In Epist.*
 themselves oftentimes, that *passim.*
 they have no longer any tye
 and adhesion to Life, nor to
 any thing of this World. But
 'tis an Errour to fancy that
 one is entirely untied from
 it, if he feels not in his Heart
 a true desire of Death. Let
 him

S. Isidor.

him who believes himself to be in so perfect an estate, enter seriously into himself, and he shall undoubtedly perceive that the Will of Man reigns yet in his Soul, and that he is not totally unclothed of the love of Life. Let him severely examine himself; let him question himself, and ask of his Soul: Do we no longer fear Death? Doth nothing fasten us any longer to Life? If we were to die within one Year, within one Month, within one Day; if we were to die in this Moment; should we be ready to render an accompt to God of our Actions? And should we have no reluctancy to quit our friends, our relations,

relations, our dwelling, our works? For we adhere to all, and this adhesion is sometimes more violent for small matters than for the greatest. Yet, if there remains any thing that chains our Will to the World, the Love which we have for God is not perfect. Our Life upon Earth is a continual Warfare. We bear Arms for the Glory of God. He commands us to march, to fight, to pour forth our blood for him. Why shall we not do for an Eternal Recompense, that which men do for the reputation of a few days? Let us then seriously examin our selves, and let us see whether our heart is wholly submitted to

S: Isidor. to this holy discipline of the Warfare of Christ Jesus. Let us see, whether according to St. Pauls precept, we have taken for the Armour of our breast and back, Faith and Charity; and for our Helmet, the Hope of Salvation. For if our submission is perfect, our Love will also be perfect, and Death will afford us joy, instead of giving us terrour.

Thes. 5. 8.

Article XXIX.

St. Eucherius *Arch-Bishop* of Lyon, exhorts Christians to observe attentively the different agitations of human Passions, the shortness of Life, and the uncertainty of Death,

Death, to the end they may
never engage themselves in *S. Eucherius.*
the tumults of the World,
and that they may be ever-
more prepared to die.

HAve you never contem-
plated from the Sea *Epist. ad*
shore, the combat of the *Valerianum.*
Winds disputing among
themselves for the Empire
of the Waves! That dread-
full bellowing of the Bil-
lows, which rush one up-
on another and push them
with such violence against
the Rocks, whilst the moun-
tains of Water and of Froth
seem to ascend to the skyes,
and then sodainly to descend
to the abyssus? Doth not
this sight inspire I know not

L

what

S. Encke. what horrou, which is nevertheless accompanied with some pleasure ; and which insensibly engages the beholder to meditate upon those mervails ? This is the most lively and the most resembling Image we can find of the Agitations of the World. But to behold them well, we must stand upon the Shore, and consider according to the spirit of God, the joys and the afflictions, the hatred and the freindship, the quarrells and the reconciliations, the fortune and the misfortune of men, the flux and the reflux of their interests, of their designs, and of all their actions ; how they do and undo,

So, how they seek and shun the same things; how one generation succeeds another; how the Grandfather makes place for the Father, and the Father for the Son; not any of them thinking seriously during the whole course of their Life of the rapidness of this motion which trails them towards their Death. Certainly, this spectacle is a learned Lesson for them who know how to make their profit of it: and we may say, that it also affords some satisfaction, when one reflects upon himself, and finds that he is exempt from that trouble which overthrows the reason of all the rest of men.

S. Enche,

Happy, Tranquillity, Adorable Peace of the love of Christ Jesus ! How sweet is it to them whom you have timely placed in the haven of their Salvation ; to behold in safety the fury of the Tempest, without fearing either the winds, or the waves, or the rocks, or the quick sands ? But as for us, who have escaped Shipwreck by a sincere penance : we, I say, who know the dangers out of which you, our good God, have delivered us ; give us we beseech you a holy horror upon the sight of this terrible spectacle of the Tempests of the World, and an ardent desire to be freed from them
for

for ever by a Christian
 Death. And surely we must
 not expect to enjoy a per-
 fect calm, so long as we so-
 journ upon Earth. Should
 we live longer, we should
 not be more happy. The
 Life of our Fathers is ended,
 our own slides dayly away.
 Let us make place for them
 who are to follow us, a
 little sooner or a little later,
 the difference is small, for
 they will not long survive
 us. Finally, in the same man-
 ner as the Surges of the Sea
 follow, push, and press
 upon one another by a pre-
 cipitated motion, and as
 the Waves which are ray-
 sed up highest fall down af-
 terward the lowest, to make

S. Enche.

room for a second, the second for a third, which is driven away by an infinity of other followers, all which in the sequell. come to be dissipated upon the shore: even so the Life of one man succeeds that of another man; one is elevated and the other is humbled according to the capriciousness of fortune. But by how much their elevation is higher, by so much the abyssus into which they sink is deeper; and all terminate in Death.

Article.

S. Ful-
gen.

Article XXX.

St. Fulgentius and S. Paulinus prove, That Death is a Recompense for the Fust, and a Chastisement for the Impious : That the length of Life is to be computed by the number of Good Works one hath performed, and not by the number of days one hath lived.

THe bad man trembles at the bare Name of Death. Hath he the least indisposition ? He believes 'tis a mortal Sickneſs. If one talks to him of God, he falls into a fury. He complains of

Fulg. Epist.
5. ad Gall.Paulin.
Ep. 37. ad 7
Pam.

S. Ful-
gen.

Prov. 12.
and 28.

Sap. 3.
and 4. &c.

the impotency of Remedies. He is pierced with the apprehension of the least danger. *His Soul*, says Solomon, is perpetually perplexed with vain terrours. He flies when no one pursues him. But the *Fust* looks upon the danger without being affrighted, and marches on like a *Lion*, who is secure of his strength and of his courage. Nothing that befalls him, contristates him : and if he were threatned even with Death, he would be so far from being afraid, that he would rejoyce at it ; because his Heart is in the hands of God, and for that the torment of Death doth not touch him. It seems to the eyes of the unwise, that the *Fust* man dies ; his departure out of the

the World appears to them an affliction. They imagine that the way he takes in separating himself from others, will bring him to nothing; whereas it is but a passage which leads him to peace and to repose. Altho^{ugh} he endures a cruel Death before men, yet God replenishes him with a certain hope of Immortality. He suffers a little, to gain much. Our Lord hath tryed him by these pains of short durance, and hath found him worthy of his Love. 'Tis Gold which he puts into the melting vessell to refine it. 'Tis a Vi-ctime which he sanctifies by the Sacrifice, to make it revive one day in Eternity. The day will come, when the Just shall possess the glory of Heaven,

S. Ful-
gen.

and he shall shine more brightly than the Starrs : we shall behold him judging Nations, and bearing sway over the people, for he is the Child of the most High. He shall share with him in his Kingdom, and the Lord of the Just shall reign Eternally. They who have confidence in him will understand this truth, they shall repose in his bosom, and shall enjoy the Peace which he hath prepared for his Elect.

But as for the Wicked, who have despised and injured the Just, and who have withdrawn themselves from God, they shall be chastised according to their crimes. How unhappy are they, to have abandonned Wisdom, and shaken off the yoke of Justice!

Justice! For all their hopes will be vain; their labours will be unprofitable; and their works will remain imperfect. If they have Wives they will be dishonest; if they have Children, they will be unnatural; A curse shall fall upon their families, and the posterity of Adulterers shall be exterminated. 'Tis in vain for them to boast of their Riches, of their Power, of their Health. Should they live longer than other men, all the years of their Life shall be counted for nothing at the day of their Death. If they die old, their old age shall be disquieted with the remorse of their Conscience; and the World growing impatient to see them so long upon Earth, will look upon them an-

ly

S. Ful-
gen.

ly with contempt, and perhaps with indignation. If they die Young, they shall be deprived of the advantages they might have had in the World, and of the hope of the heavenly Good. Finally, the Death of the wicked is the ruine of their race; 'tis a desolation without hope, a night without light, an *Abysmus* of miseries, where nothing dwells but a dismal nothing and an eternal horror.

These sentences of the sacred Scripture make us see, That only Impious and Infidells need to fear Death. but that Christians who are indued with piety, should be so far from fearing it, that they ought even to desire.

fire it. Certainly, a happy Life doth not consist in living a long time, but in living in a perfect submission to the orders of Providence. What doth it serve us to continue upon earth even to a decrepit age? Is not Innocence of Life to be preferred before the duration of Life? and is not purity of manners more worth than old age? The Scripture speaking of the Just man who dies young, hath sayd; *That he was snatch'd speedily out of the World, lest the Master of error should seduce his spirit, and lest Malice should corrupt his Soul: But because he became perfect in a short time, 'tis as if he had lived.*

S. Ful.

gen.

Sap. 4. 11.

v. 13.

S. Ful-
gen.

lived many Years : and God
to whom this Soul was agreeable,
hastned to withdraw her from the
midst of iniquity, wherewith the
whole Earth is replenished.

Article XXXI.

As St. Gregory the Pope was
himself very infirm and sick-
ly ; so he speaks and writes
frequently of Death. He is
one of the Ecclesiastical Au-
thours who hath fill'd his
Works with the strongest re-
flections upon this subject.
We have drawn out four or
five of them, which best re-
late to our proposed Design.

I. Reflection

*Reflection of St. Gregory, S. Gregory.
That the Continual view of^{ry}.
Death is the most assured
means to lead a holy and
quiet Life.*

HE who seriously consi- *Moral. in 1*
ders what he ought to *c. 17. Job.*
hope for or to fear at the
article of Death, must needs
act with great circumspecti-
on, and have a continual
apprehension of falling into
Sin. That last hour which
he hath evermore present
before his Eyes, renders
him truly living to the Eyes
of God. He fixes upon no-
thing that is perishable. He
desires nothing of all that
which men who live with-
out

*S. Grego-
ry.*

out Reflection, seek with
so much earnestness; and
the disposition wherein he
places himself every hour,
as if he were then to die,
makes him to look upon
himself as already dead. For
Life is by so much the more
holy and more perfect, by
how much it hath relation
each moment to Death. Ho-

Eccles. 7. ly Scripture teaches, us, that
the more men study this
Lesson, and contemplate
themselves in this Looking-
Glass which flatters not,
the farther they are from
falling into the snares of Sin.

Article.

S. Greg.

Article XXXII.

2. Reflexion of St. Gregory:
*That naturally all the Desires
 and all the Actions of man
 tend to Death: That Grace
 should do that in us which
 Nature doth of it self: That
 according to the thought of
 Job, Life resembles the day
 of a hireling, a pilgrimage,
 a warfare, where no one en-
 roll's himself but to die in
 fighting against the Enemies
 of our Salvation.*

THe Sick person who
 lies languishing in pain Lib. 2.
 and in sadness, expects with Mor. c. 3.
 impatience the return of Lib. 12.
 the c. 3.

S. Greg. the day ; but the Sun which brings the Light , brings no remedy to his misery ; on the contrary it diminishes one day of his Life. The Hireling finds the hours of his labour over-long, and blames the Night for coming on so slowly. The Covetous man counts with discontent all the moments which retard his revenues. The Ambitious man, who hath conceiv'd great designs, would in order to hasten the success, hasten the years of his Life. The Husbandman makes vows to see his Harvest ripen. Finally, it seems that men demand nothing but to be Old, altho' they apprehend nothing so much

much as Old-age. In Winter we wish the return of *S. Greg.* the Spring. Scarcely is the season of Flowers past over, but we desire that of Fruits. In Autumn we say that Winter hath it's pleasures. Thus it is that the Spirit of Man, unquiet and insupportable to it self, carries on its vain desires, from one time to another, and not enjoying the present, anticipates always upon the future, and marches by a secret impatience towards his Death. What we do by a hidden motion of Nature, why shall we not do by the Inspiration and by the Succour of Grace? Grace incessantly advertises us, that this

S. Greg.

this Life is short and miserable, and that we ought to aspire to another Life which is everlasting and happy. Sometimes the sacred Scripture teaches us this Verity, by comparing Life to a Pilgrimage, wherein we are to make what speed we are able. Otherwhiles it compares it to a Warfare, whereinto we enroll our selves to die in fighting against the Enemies of Christ Jesus. At other times it represents Death unto us under the Parable of a Hireling, who tills the Vineyard for the price of his days labour. O Christians, when the Evening shall come, let not us imitate those indiscreet

discreet Vignerons, who
complained that they had *S. Greg.*
born the burden of the day,
and endured the heat of the
Sun. Let's not presume that
we have deserv'd a larger
recompense than they who
have labour'd less time than
we. It belongs to the Ma-
ster of the Vinyard to dis-
tribute his Wages as him-
self pleases. At what ever
hour he calls us to his ser-
vice, let us labour as long
as the day lasts. Our Lord
knows well how to pay un-
to each one what appertains
to him. Perhaps the last *Mat. 20.*
shall be first, and the first *12.*
last, because there are ma-
ny called and but few cho-
sen. Let us expect the hour
of

S. Greg. of payment with Patience and with Humility. That hour, O Christians, is the hour of Death ; for this Death which we so much dread, is the period of our pains, and the time of our reward.

Article XXXIII.

3. *Reflexion of St. Gregory:*
That they who have the World, love some reason to fear the end of it ; but that they who serve Christ Jesus, ought not to apprehend the destruction of the World : on the contrary, they ought to endure with patience, War, Famine, Pestilence,

Pestilence, Detraction, Persecution, and the other Scurges. S. Greg.
ges wherewith the hand of
God chastises men; because
these are the signs of the se-
cond coming of our Saviour.

IF the scourges of God fall
upon your Head, lift it ^{Hom. 1.}
up, and look towards Heaven; and 13. in
because your Redemption is near ^{Evan.}
at hand. Behold the Fig-tree, Luk. 21.
and all other Trees, when their
fruit begins to be formed, you
say that Summer is coming on.
So when you shall see all these
things arrive, which the
common sort of men account
tribulations, know that the King-
dome of Christ Jesus approach-
eth, and that Christians ought
to rejoyce thereat as at the
greatest

S. Greg. greatest of all good things; because they shall never possess the Kingdom of God, untill that of the Devil, which is the World, shall be destroyed. It belongs therefore to them only who have the love of the World rooted in their Heart, who look not after eternal Life, who even fancy that there is none: It only belongs, I say, to those wretched Children of the World, to afflict themselves for the end of the World. But as for us, who are the Children of God, who know that our Patrimony is not upon Earth, but that it expects us in the glory of the Eternal Father; we rejoyce to see

see an end of the Worlds
 Tyranny, which hath al-
 ready too long lasted. *Hea-* *Luk. 21.*
ven and Earth shall pass, but 33.
my Words shall not pass, says
our Lord. Those are the works
of his Hands; they shall perish, *Heb. 1. 11.*
but our Lord will remain; They
will wax old as a Garment;
They will change their form as
a Cloak: But he who created
them will be evermore the same, *Pf. 101. v.*
and his years will have no end. *26. 27. &c.*
The Just shall dwell with him,
and their Posterity shall be eter-
nally happy.

Article XXXIV.

4. *Reflection of St. Gregory:*
That there are few Just who

M

can

S. Greg.

Gal. 6. 14.

can truly say with St. Paul :
 God forbid that I should
 glory of any other thing
 than of the Cross of our
 Lord Jesus Christ ; be-
 cause the World is dead
 and crucified for me , as
 I am dead and crucified
 for the World : *That al-*
tho' the major part of good
people employ all their Life
to die to the World , yet it
frequently falls out that the
World dies not to them ;
but on the contrary that it
strives to corrupt them by
its flatteries and by its illu-
sions. From whence this ho-
ly Doctour takes an occasion
to exhort Christians to be
willing to go forth of this
place which is so dangerous,
and

and to desire Death as the
Sole Remedy of all their
Evills. S. Greg.

There is no Just Man
who doth not acknow- Moral. 7. 3.
ledge himself miserable dur- c. 2. 3. 8cc.
ing this Life, and who con-
siders it not as a painfull
and perilous Pilgrimage. He
knows that the Dignities and
the Riches of the World are
things perishable. But what
ever experience he dayly
makes of them, they cease
not to leave in his spirit
the same impression which
the sight of a delicious Coun-
try leaves in the Spirit of
a Traveller. He doth not
absolutely prefer it before
his native Land; but he is

S. Greg.

less impatient to get home
to it. What should press us
to leave Life, will some one
say, if we make good use
of it? Our Lord hath gi-
ven us Goods, let us employ
them for his Glory. He for-
bids not the enjoyment of
Honours, when one refers
them all to him. What harm
is there in hearing our Pray-
ses published, so long as we
cease not to prayse God.
Thus doth the World en-
deavour to seduce the Ju-
man by subtle stratagems
which it disguises under the
appearances of Virtue. But
a true Christian grounded
in the love of Christ Jesus
speaks another Language.
you Honours of the World

say

Says he, you Riches, Health,
Commodities of Life, I am S. Greg.
not to look upon you but as
the obstacles of my Salvati-
on. In this sad voyage which
I make upon Earth, my
Soul sends forth continual
sighs for the length of her
exile, nor can she suffer with
patience that which sepa-
rates her from her dear
Countrey. What a remisness,
what an imprudence is it,
to stay upon the Earth for
the exercising of an Office
and Dignity which torments
us, to distribute our Goods
which are capable to cor-
rupt us, to acquire a Praise
which may make us proud,
and perhaps for some other
end which is yet more vain.

S. Greg.

and frivolous? Ah, my Soul! do not thou adhere to any worldly thing; thou wilt not there meet with any thing which is not unworthy of thy affection. Remember the nobility of thy origin, thou comest from Heaven; the Earth is not for thee: God did not create thee to animate eternally a lump of Flesh. Death will ere long destroy this Body, in which thou takest so much complacency: but its loss ought not to afflict thee, God will one day repair it. 'Tis Sin which thou oughtest to dread, there is thy Death, and a terrible and irreparable Death. Thou wilt be exposed to the danger

ger of this Death so long as
thou sojournest upon Earth. *S. Greg.*
Go forth of it then, my Soul,
go forth of thy Prison ;
separate thy self from thy
Body : for I burn with a de-
fire to die, that I may go to
live eternally with my Lord
Jesus.

Behold what are the sen-
timents of perfect Christians.
They have learned in the
School of so good a Master,
that even they who most
desire to die, notwithstanding
that they are already
dead to the World, yet the
World ceases not to live to
them, and to ly every where
in wait to entrap them,
sometimes by applauding
their Virtues, and other

M 4 times

S: Greg.

times by extolling their Actions. It besieges them, it pursues them, it enchains them by secret confidences, by continual visits, by an ardent seeking of their freindship. All these things seem only to tie an innocent knot, and which may have a very good end. Nevertheless the danger is great, and it is a temerarious confidence to expose ones self thereto without an extreme necessity. The World loses nothing in this traffick; on the contrary, it serves it very frequently for an honest Veil to hide its Vices: but the Just man runs a great hazard thereby, and sits down always with the loss. The Devil, who is but

but too ingenious to deceive
us, employs a thousand sub-
til crafts, disguises himself
into all manner of shapes,
and even into that of Vir-
tue, in order to seduce us.
At first he distills light distra-
ctions, little sollicitudes,
vain desires, unprofitable cu-
riosities, which diminish
by little and little the fer-
vour of our devotions, and
which estrange from our
memory the thoughts of
Death. Then the same Spirit
which cools the Love of
God, enkindles insensibly in
our Soul those former affe-
ctions which repentance and
Charity had there as it were
stifled and buried. Alas!
how few Just persons are

S^g Greg.

found who entirely imitate
S. Paul in this double Death
 of the Christian to the
 World, and of the World
 to the Christian ! Where
 are they whose Conscience
 renders to them the same
 testimony as it did to this
 great Apostle, and who have
 put themselves into a perfect
 liberty, by breaking not on-
 ly all the Chains which
 kept them fast tyed to the
 World, but moreover those
 which tyed the World to
 them. For 'tis not enough
 to have despised and aban-
 doned the World ; we must
 so order it, that the World
 may despise and abandon us.
 This is that which the Apo-
 stle intends to teach us,
 when

when he says: *The World is dead and crucified for me, as I am dead and crucified for the World.* The World was crucified to him, because it was dead in his heart, and was no more any thing to him but the object of his contempt and of his hatred: but besides this, he was also crucified to the World, because having made appear an insensibility for the concerns of the Earth, the world ceased to seek after him, and did no longer so much as think of him.

If we take not heed, we shall find that even in the most retired professions, in the greatest disgust of the vanities, of the infidelities, and
off

S. Greg.

of the corruptions of the world, when we fancy that we are for ever freed from them; yet there still remain some roots thereof in our Heart. We hold no more of the world, but it holds us yet by imperceptible bonds. We make a shew of shunning it, and yet we are not sorry that it should seek after us, and that it should come sometimes to trouble our solitude, which would otherwise appear to us dismal and insupportable. Finally, with a mean Virtue one may forget the world, but one must have an extraordinary Virtue to wish to be forgotten by the world. This is that which holy Souls
aym

aym at, which are perfectly unfettered from the world, S. Greg^e. They not only suffer themselves not to be drawn by the World, but moreover they draw not the World to themselves. And 'tis to them that may be applyed the saying of S. *Paul* : Man and the World are reciprocally Crucified, one in regard of the other ; because they not seeking one another, nor mutually loving each other, are as two dead things which can no longer have any communication.

But alas ! how few there are who can come to the happiness of this double Death ? The greatest Saints, all crucified as they are to the World,

S. Greg.

Psal. 90.

World, cannot without the succour of an extraordinary Grace, crucify the World entirely in themselves. Therefore it is that they incessantly mortify themselves, and they cry out with David; *Lord, save my Soul from the Ambushes of her Enemies; defend her against the cunning of deceitfull Tongues: deliver me from the snares of the Hunters, and from the corruption of the World.* For altho' the Just man flies the World, and is perfectly disengaged from it, he evermore apprehends that he hath something in himself which engages the world to follow him. *But if God covers him with his Wings, (to make use*

use of the Royal Prophets
words, what ever endea- S. Greg.
vours the world makes to
seek him out, it will not
find him; or if it finds him,
it will find him Dead as to
all earthly concerns, doing
nothing to please it, nor to
allure it, being deaf to it's
prayes, insensible to it's
blandishments, indifferent
to its interests, without cu-
riosity, without pretention,
without disquiet, doing
good for goodness sake, and
little caring to have confe-
derates or admirers of his
Virtue. On the contrary, if
in labouring for Gods glory,
he encreases his own glory,
he will so far humble him-
self in his own interiour and
before

S. Greg.

before others ; that the aversion which he will testify against all flatteries, will foil his Flatterers. Finally, the World, which will not entertain any traffick with the Just but upon some motive of interest or of pleasure, will cease to seek after him ; and finding there no more nourishment to live upon, will die and crucify it self in him. For 'tis most certain that the World is in that, like unto the Sea, which swallows up and detains within its bosom the living Bodies, but rejects the dead carcases and leaves them upon the sands. So, the World lays hold upon that only which is yet living and sensible

sible for it, and abandons
that which is devoyd of feel-
ing and of Life for all such
things as any way concern it.

S. Greg.

Article XXXV.

*A pithy Description made by
the Great St. Gregory, of
the Necessities and of the
Miseries of the Body and of
the Soul. From whence this
holy Man concludes, That
men should desire to die, in
order to enjoy a better Life,
in which they shall be no
longer exposed either to Sor-
row or to Sin.*

S. Greg.

Lib. Moral.

in c. 7. Job.

ONE cannot express all the Miseries to which Man is expos'd by Sin. His Body is subject to a thousand sorts of infirmities ; it is expos'd to the injuries of the Air and of all the Elements , to Dangers, to Diseases, to the ignorance of Physicians, which is sometimes more to be dreaded than the Diseases themselves. The natural Heat which sustains his Life, devours its proper substance as soon as it wants nourishment. If he reposes, sloath renders him unweldy ; if he is employed, labour drains him ; if he eats, the meat overcharges him ; thirst dries him.

him up, the excess of drink makes him brutish; sleep oppresses him, watching wears him; cold pinches him, heat stifles him; and that which eases him of one incommodity, casts him presently into another. Finally, on which ever side he turns himself, he is tormented by the Evil, or by the Remedy.

The Soul hath no less weakneses and miseries than the Body. You see her one day deceived by Hope, and on the morrow troubled with Fear; Anger transports her; Sadness dejects her, Joy dissipates her, Envy gnaws her, and nothing contents her. One Passion follows another; and sometimes for one that is,

is destroy'd, there spring
S. Greg. up a thousand. The sacred
 Scripture compares this agitation to the dreadful Tempests which are raised upon
Isa. 57. 20. the Waters: *Who can then,*
says the Prophet, number all
the Waves of the Sea! Nevertheless 'tis yet a harder task
 to count the desires of Man,
who goes astray in the error of
Jacob. v. 6. *his Heart,* He will, and he
 will not at the same time
 the same things. He seeks
 with impatience what he
 hath not, and he is presently
 disgusted with what he possesses. Vice is followed with
 remorse; Virtue is accompanied with pains; he knows
 not to which of the two he
 should apply himself. His
 first

first motion inclines him to Good, and yet he doth the Evil by reflexion, at the same time when he condemns it. The Apostle St. Paul says: *I find in my self a Will to do Good, but I find not the means to accomplish it. For I do not the Good to which I have a will, and I do the Evil which I would not.* There is nothing good in Man. He is submitted both together to the Law of God according to the Spirit, and to the Law of Sin according to the Flesh. God and the World draw him by turns. He is a Compound of all that which is most motley in Nature, always and in every thing unlike to himself, His manners,

S.Greg.

Rom.7.18.

S. Greg.

ners, his opinions, his desires, all his actions, all his thoughts, are in a continuall instability. Finally, one may sooner stop the course of the Winds, and the rapidity of a Torrent, than fix his inconstancy by the sole force of Reason. Thus, the more our Soul examines her self, the less she knows her self. Who am I, for example, I who make so many reflections upon others? What is the Beginner that stirs all the parts of my Body? By what means do they come to know the orders of my Will? How can they execute them with so much readiness? But this will, what makes it spring up

up in me? Whence proceeds
this intelligence which *S. Greg.*
guides it, these lights which
clear it, these darkneses
which sometimes encompass
it? It walks upon the wings
of the winds, upon the points
of the Waves; it penetrates
the highest Heavens; it des-
cends into the center of the
Earth; it carries its curi-
osity into every corner; and
yet the most common and
the most sensible objects hide
themselves from its know-
ledge: in a word, it knows
not what it self is. Man
thinks, and he knows not
what it is to think; he rea-
sons, and he cannot say
what reason is. The Soul is
united to the Body, and she
conceives

S. Greg.

conceives not how she is united to it ; she enters not there , and she goes not from thence when she pleases ; the matter which she animates , serves her for a Prison ; and by an inclination opposit to her nature , she loves this Prison which keeps her captive. The Senses which should be in all things subject unto her , revolt incessantly against her , deceive her , and corrupt her. 'Tis an assembly of qualities which are mortal and immortal , which are corruptible and incorruptible. Water is not so contrary to Fire , as these Qualities are contrary among themselves ; yet all agree together in one and the

the same subject, notwithstanding that 'tis impossible *S. Greg.* to say either what makes their mutual intelligence, or what breaks it. One cannot number all the kinds of Diseases which may separate the Soul from the Body; and yet the Soul acts as if nothing were able to separate her from it. She heaps up designs upon designs, hopes upon hopes, and there needs no more than a blast to overturn all. *O Man, thou confused Pile of uncertainties and of miseries, learn not to pry into that which is above thee, since thou knowest not thy own self, since thou art ignorant of that which is proper to thy self during thy Life, and*

*Eccles. 7.
and 8.*

N

in

S. Greg.

in this little number of days
 design'd for thy Pilgrimage up-
 on Earth, which pass as the sha-
 dow of a smoak : 'Tis the
 Wisest among men who hath
 said : No one knows how he
 is to finish his course. And
 even as the Fishes are caught
 by the hook of the Fisher, and
 Birds are taken in the Nets of
 the Fowler ; so Men fall into
 the ambushes of Death when
 they least dream of it. What
 is Man, O my God, that he
 should by you be so highly
 honoured ? Why do you
 cast your eyes and employ
 your thoughts upon a Ves-
 sel so feeble and so full of
 iniquity ? You visit him in the
 Morning, and presently you ex-
 ercise him by strong Tryalls. He
 hath

Job. 7. 19.

hath scarcely begun to see
 the day light, before he falls *S. Grrg.*
 into Darknes. *His Body is Psal. 15.*
 but a heap of dust, and his Life
 fleets away as the Grass : it
 blooms in Morning like the
 Flowers of the Field ; and in
 the Evening the smallest blast
 of wind withers it : it dwindles
 away, and there remains no
 track of the place where it but
 now flourished. It seems as if
 after you had formed man,
 you had abandon'd him to
 his own conduct. You have *Eceli. 15.*
 set before his eyes the Water and
 the Fire, Life and Death, Good
 and Evil, to the end you
 might leave him the liberty
 of choyce which is almost
 always unlucky to him.
 There are none who have *un- Psal. 13.*

S. Greg.

*derstanding and light. There are none who seek God. They are gon astray from the right path. They are all corrupted. There is not any one who (of himself) doth good, no, there is not one. Lord , why do you leave them to be a prey to their Passions , and to the hardness and malignity of their own Heart ? Know you not that our fall is inevitable , as soon as you withdraw your hand from holding us up ? Do not then estrange your self from us, O Lord , you who are our only prop and our strength. Draw us out of the mire of the World, that we may not sink down and be drown'd in it. Deliver us from those world-
lings,*

lings, who have made choyce of this present Life for their portion. Overwhelm them S. Gregory

with an abundance of your riches and of your treasures, wherewith they may satiate their cupidity. But as for us, who have placed our treasure in Heaven, our Heart is where our Treasure is.

Grant then, O my God, that we may perfectly renounce all the goods of the Earth, and that we may surmount all the miseries of our Nature.

Grant that we may carry evermore in our Body the death of our Lord Jesus, to the end that the Life of Jesus may appear also in our Body. For we who live for him, are every hour deliver'd up to Death

S. Climacus. for him, that we may live eternally in his Glory.

Article XXXVI.

Degree. 6. St. John Climacus distinguishes the desires of Death which the Devil suggests unto us, from those which Grace inspires : and of this Doctrine he composes one degree of his holy Ladder ; where he shews, That the Meditation of Death is the most profitable of all Spiritual practises.

Degree. 8. *n. 3. & 4.* *Ibid. 8.* **A**S all apprehensions of Death are not criminal ; so all the desires of Death are not always lawfull. According to Nature, Man dreads to

to die, and Christ Jesus himself was apprehensive of *S. Climax* it ; to make it clearly appear to men, that he had taken upon him all the weaknesses of humanity , and that there were two Natures united in his Person. If God had not given to the Soul this natural adhesion for her Body, she would not remain there shut up one instant. This adhesion is therefore an order of Providence, and not a disorder of Sin. But to know whether the Desires or Fears of Death are criminal or commendable , we must examine the reasons which move us to dread it or to desire it. There are some who by a motive of

N 4 Despair

S. Clama. Despair desire to die, when they find themselves oppress'd with sickness or with affliction : and these are very faulty, in not receiving these chastisements from the hand of God with patience and humility. Others, after they have imbraced a Penitent Life, are discouraged, and grow weary of suffering for the expiation of their Sins : and these surely are very unhappy, for they lose the fruit of all the good works which they have formerly performed. They have kept their Lamps along time lighted, and they let them go out at the hour perhaps in which the Bridegroom is ready to come. Others

thers there are, who being
 puffed up with a vain pre-
 sumption, imagin that they
 are arrived at the soverain
 peace of Soul, and have
 gotten a compleat victory o-
 ver all their Passions, be-
 cause they have no longer any
 fear of Death. They perceive
 not that this Pride is a thou-
 sand times worse than the
 fear of Death, and that the
 malice of our invisible Ene-
 mies is so great, that they
 convert the seeds of Virtues
 into Vices. Some others more
 conformable to the Spirit of
 Christianism, seeing that
 the violence of their evil
 Customs makes them to re-
 lapse incessantly into Sin,
 desire Death with thoughts

S. Climacus

7. Degree
n. 68.

of repentance and of humility. These sentiments are laudable, and yet they are but the beginning of Christian perfection. One arrives at this perfection, when being dead to all the affections of the World, to the World it self, and to Sin, one desires to die upon no other motive than only to be entirely united to Christ Jesus.

'Tis by this mark that one may know the difference between the natural apprehensions of Death, and the fear which proceeds not from the feeling of Nature ; between the Impatience which comes from Despair, and the desire which the hope of.

of a better Life produces.
For he who hath not re-^{Si. Clima.}
nounced all created things ^{6. Degree}
and his own will, betrays ^{n. 20. and}
himself; and is like to a Sol-
dier who should present him-
self with his hands tyed in
the day of Battle.

They who during their ^{26. De-}
Lifetime have their Heart ^{gree,}
and Spirit link'd to Heaven, ^{n. 106.}
mount up to Heaven after
their Death. But they who
have had their Soul link'd
to the Earth, descend under
the Earth. The goods and
the honours of the World ^{26. De-}
are as so many rotten steps ^{gree,}
of a Ladder, upon which the ^{n. 177.}
humble man cannot set his
foot without putting himself
in danger to lose his Humi-
lity. He

He who voluntarily re-
S. Clima. signs himself to Death, and
6. Degree. who expects it without fear,
B. 12. hath some Vertue : But he
 who at every hour desires it,
 may pass for a Saint. We can-
 not live holily one sole day,
 if we do not desire that it
 may be the last day of our
 Life, rather than to offend
 God in it. The continual
 thought of Death extinguish-
 es at last all Vices. And as a
 perfect Charity renders a
 man exempt from falling in-
 to Sin ; so a perfect Medita-
B. p. 14. tion of Death renders him
 incapable to fear any thing
 but the Judgements of God.
 And surely there is reason to
 admire, that the Pagans
 themselves have said some-
 thing.

thing not unlike unto this ;
when they declared, That *S. Clima?*
Phylosophy or the love of
Wisdom is nothing else but
a continual study of Death.

Article XXXVII.

St. Bernard teaches us, That
*Hope is the portion of true
Christians , and that this
Virtue enables them to suf-
fer patiently all the evils of
this Life, and to Love and De-
sire Death.*

THe Children of dark-
ness sleep in the night *Scr. 6. in*
season : but as for us, my *Pf. 90. &*
Brethren, who are Children *alibi.*
of light, let us watch in ex- *Thess. 33*
pectation ..

S. Ber-
nard.

pectation of the days coming in which we are to sleep the sleep of Death. Let us arm our selves with a holy Hope to fight against this drowfiness of the World. Let Sensualists shut their eyes against the beams of this Hope, and let them repose in the wantonness of a voluptuous Life. Let them say, we are in peace and in security; who can discover us? what can trouble the enjoyment of our pleasures? *The day will come, when they shall be overwhelmed with an un-foreseen ruine, as a Woman is surprized by the pangs of Childing.* How terrible are your judgments, how incomprehensible are your words, O Lord? *Whilst the*
Wicked

[*ap. 17.*

Wicked insult over the holy Nation of your Elect, and flatter themselves that they shall always domineer; a stroke of your hand lays these fugitive slaves in the dust, who fancied they could steal themselves from your eternal Justice. They who were seen to triumph over your Patience, are all enwrap'd in the shadows of a long and dismal night, as many Criminalls are fast linked together with one and the same Chain. As for us, O my God! who have no share in their Sleep, nor in their Blindness, we lift up our Eyes incessantly towards Heaven from whence we expect our help. You O Lord, *Psalm. 134.* are our good, and all our portion. This part which is fallen to
 our

S. Ber.

our Lot is rich and delicious.
Our hereditary share is of an
incomparable excellency. 'Tis for
this that our Heart rejoyceth,
and that we sing with alacrity,
because you will not leave the
Soul of the Just in Hell, nor
will you suffer him whom you have
made holy, to see corruption.

Thus, O Lord, the inheritance of the Children of
Jacob is more worth than
the riches of the Children of
Esau: for when they should
possess the whole Earth,
when the Goods which the
World promises them should
be great; the possession
thereof is not peaceable, the
duration is but short, the
end is uncertain, and the
loss of them is follow'd with
an

an infinite number of miseries. Let him who rests assured upon the darkness and upon the uncertainty of this Life, learn that Death hath no respect for Treasures, for the greatness, nor for the glory of men. It neither pardons the lustre of birth, nor of manners, nor of age; except only that it is at the dore of old men, and that it lies in wait for young ones. To ground ones hope upon all these things, is to imitate that senseless person of whom the Gospel says: *He built his house upon the Sands, the Rain fell, the Rivers overflowed, the Winds blew, and setting upon this house, it was soon overturned, and great was its ruine,*

S. Ber.

De morum
conversio-
ne.

Mat. 7. 29.

S. Ber.

Job. 21.

ine, because it was hurried away before its time, and when the owner thought least of it. The Torrent hath devoured all even to the foundations. What a folly is it to consume in a perishable work the time which one ought to employ in acquiring an eternal happiness? Do we not consider that this Life is but a Vapour which vanishes? O thou Ambitious person, hast thou obtained at last the Dignity for which so many years thou underhand laboured'st? The weight of it will quickly oppress thee. O thou Covetous man, hast thou stuff'd thy Coffers with money? Take care of losing it, and beware of Thieves: the Harvest

Harvest hath been plentiful, pull down thy Barns to build greater, change and re-change thy Edifices, toyl, heap up, pole and pillage on all sides, and then sit down and say : O *Le. 12.*
my Soul, how happy are we now ? 19

We have Goods in store for the whole remainder of our Life.
Ah ! how long will this Life yet last ? Perhaps not one Year, perhaps but one Day, perhaps but a Moment ; and perhaps in that fatal Moment in which thou makest in thy Soul these vain projects of a long possession of all these Goods, God will re-demand this Soul ; and then ; who shall enjoy the fruit of thy labours ?

It is not so with them
who

S. Ber.

who place all their hope in God, who uncloath themselves of all affection to worldly goods, who are evermore ready to quit the Earth and always enflam'd with the desire of the Heavenly goods; because they have heaped such goods together as the Worms cannot devour, nor the Theives purloin from them. The blind Lovers of the World believe that we in this estate lead a life here below full of bitterness: but 'tis because the blindness of their Spirit renders them incapable to conceive the sweetnesses wherewith the Love of Christ Jesus incessantly fills the Soul of the Just, even whilst

whilst she is yet a captive
within the Prison of her *S. Ber.*
Flesh. Surely, we must not
imagine that this Paradise
of inward delights whereof
God gives sometimes a tast
even in this world to his
Elect, is a place which is
sensible and material. 'Tis
not the feet, 'tis the motion
of the Heart, which con-
ducts to this enclosed Gar-
den, to this sealed Fountain,
which causes to issue forth of
the only source of Wisdom,
the living water of the four
Virtues. In this delicious
place, Hope makes us feel
the excellent Odours of this
tree of Life, of this Pome-
granet-tree of the Canticles,
more precious than all the
trees

S. Ber.

trees of the Forests, under the shadow whereof the Bridegroom delights to refresh himself. There it is that one tast's by advance with a holy greediness, the incomparable pleasures of the Divine Love. Nevertheless, these pleasures which the eye of the sensual man cannot behold, and which the spirit of the World cannot comprehend, are not counted among the rewards of the eternal Life, 'tis but a pay of the temporal Warfare. *Tast*, says David, *and acknowledg the delights of our Lord.* 'Tis a Manna which satiates, without giving any disgust.

Ps. 33, 8.

But, O Christians, let not

us

us imitate our Fathers, who
fed upon the Manna and are *S. Ber.*
dead : let us make provision
only to continue our Jour-
ney, and to get strength to
overcome the difficulties of
the way. An incorruptible
Food expects us in Heaven:
'tis that Celestial nourish-
ment after which we must
have an insatiable hunger.
Let us demand of God that
he will introduce us to this
delicious banquet of the
Lamb without blemish ,
where we shall sit at his Ta-
ble in the company of Saints
and of Angells in a happy
Eternity.

Article

S. Ber.

Article XXXVIII.

S. Bernard proves, *That to the end we may not fear Death, but may endure it with patience, and even receive it with Joy; we must prepare our selves dayly for it by sincere Repentance: That by this means Grace overcomes Nature: That what appears so terrible to a sinful man, becomes pleasing to a just man, but particularly to them who have embraced the Religious and solitary Life.*

'Tis

TIs a constant truth, the *S. Ber.*
 more one mortifies him- *De div.*
 self, the more one hopes *Ser. 18. in*
 for Mercy, and by conse- *Cons.*
 quence one less needs to ap- *Ser. 26.*
 prehend Death. A Christi-
 an who mortifies his Body, *In Vigil.*
 who entirely disengages him- *Nativ. Ser.*
 self from the Earth, and *2^d Tract.*
 who exercises himself in all *de Vita Se-*
 sorts of Virtues during his *litaria.*
 Life, feels his Courage and
 even his Joy redoubled,
 when he is to die. He looks
 on Death as a Sanctuary
 and a secure Harbour. He
 leaps over this passage which
 is so short, as a Bridge to
 thwart the impetuous tor-
 rent of this Lives bitterness.
 Finally he desires Death as

O

the

S. Ber.

the term of his banishment, as the day in which he is to shake off his fetters, and to free himself for ever from the miseries which oppressed him.

Now if God gives this Grace to persons remaining in the World, he gives it yet more abundantly, to good Religious, and such as are truly Solitary; because they have embraced a profession, into which they enter by a Spiritual Death, by separating themselves from all things which afford any adhesion to the Life of the Body. In effect, what is it that a true Solitary person can fear in Death? or rather, what will he not there find

find to desire? He learns in his little Cell to uncloath himself of all that is in the World. He makes it in his retrait his continual study to contemplate the felicity of Paradise. A Cell and Heaven have a near relation to one another: what is done in Heaven, is done also in a Cell: one is there employ'd upon God; there one enjoys God and the society of Angells; there one leads a Life altogether Celestial. The Cell is a holy place, tis a sacred Mountain, where the Soverain Master of the World, uncloathing himself, if we may say it, of all his Majesty, frequently entertains himself with

S. Ber.

his Servant , without witness , without reserve , as one freind with another.

And even as the Temple is the Sanctuary of God , so the Cell is the Sanctuary of a true Religious man. Whether his Soul raises up herself to the enjoyment of the blessed Eternity , either by fervent Prayer, or by a holy Death , she finds a short and easy way from the Cell to Heaven. The weight of earthly affections hinders not her flight thither. The Love of God wherewith she is enflamed lifts her above the Earth by a secret force like that of the Adamant. They who are in so sublime an estate , have not only acquired

red Sanctity, but moreover the perfection of Sanctity, and the very height of perfection it self. But let them give thanks to the Authour of these Favours with a profound Humility. For as Pride caus'd the most perfect Angels to fall from the height of Heaven, so the same Pride hath caus'd many Solitary persons to perish. If God inspires us with a contempt of this Life, and an ardent desire of Death; let us attribute to his sole Bounty such Sentiments which are so contrary to our Nature, and let us humbly expect that he will hear our Prayers.

S. Ber.

Article XXXIX.

Reflections of St. Bernard, concerning the contempt which perfect Christians ought to have of Health and of Life. From whence he takes occasion to speak of the Patience they are to practise in their Infirmities, and of the Joy which the continual thought of Death affords them, if they are true Disciples of Christ Jesus.

Ser. 30.
in Cant.

Hypocrates pretends to teach us the method of preserving and prolonging our Life : *Epicurus* seeks the means to make us pass it o-

ver

ver pleasantly : But *Christ*
Jesus instructs us to des- S. Ber.
pise it and to lose it, or to
render it more short and
more painfull.

Which side will you take?
To which of these Masters
will you become Disciples?
In my Judgement the choyce
contains no difficulty ; I am
not in pain to determine my
self, either concerning the
Sentiments which I ought
to follow , or concerning
the Doctrine which I am to
propose unto you. I am no
Disciple either of *Hypocrates*
or of *Epicurus* ; I am the
Disciple of *Christ Jesus*, and
I speak to the Disciples of
Christ Jesus. I should be a
Prevaricator, if I should

S. Ber.

teach you other Maxims than his. *Hypocrates* undertakes to preserve the health of the Body ; *Epicurus* would banish from it all sorrow, and cause Pleasure to reign in the Soul : On the contrary, *Christ Jesus* my Master ordains us to endure Sicknesses, to love Sorrows, and to shun Pleasures. Thus, the *Physitian* aymes only to entertain for a long time the union of the Soul and of the Body ; the *Phylosopher* thinks on nothing but how to render this Union delightfull ; and both of them finally confine their spirit to this mortal and perishable Life, which they cannot with all their Science either prolong
one

one day, or exempt one hour from miseries. But *Christ Fe. S. Bern.* *sus*, who levells his Doctrine only at an immortal Life, and who knows that the Labours and Pains of the transitory Life are absolutely necessary to deserve the repose and the pleasures of Eternity, speaks of nothing but of hating our selves and of loving sufferings and Death. Doth he not tell us in the sacred Scripture: *He who hath a desire to save himself, John 12:25* let him lose himself; and he who shall lose himself for the love of me and of the Gospel, shall save himself? And what is it to lose ones self, if it is not to abandon ones self to the misfortunes and to

S. Ber. the pains of Life, as a Martyr; or to afflict ones self by voluntary Mortifications, as a Penitent? For 'tis a kind of Martyrdom, to suffer constantly Sickneses, or the injuries of Fortune, and to Mortify the Flesh by a severe Penance, and by a continual meditation of Death.

Epist. 384. We have hereupon the example of the Holy Fathers, and of our blessed Predecessors. Why think you did they make choyce of shady, low, and moist Valleys for the building of their Monasteries? It was surely to the end that the bad Ayr causing frequent Infirmities to befall the Religious there residing, those

those sicknesses might exercise their Patience, and render Death to them more familiar and more desirable. In a word, my Brethren, the Science of the Saints *Serm. 21. de diversis* consists in suffering for some time Pains and Afflictions, in order to acquire a happiness full of Joy and of Rest in Eternity.

Article XXXX.

Altho' the Book of the Imitation of Christ is in every ones hands, yet it will not be unprofitable to extract out of it some pithy passages, concerning the contempt of Life. There is, if we may say it,

Admirati-
on of Ch.

a Moisture and an Unction
of Sanctity in all the Words
of that Authour, which pe-
netrate even to the bottom of
the heart, and which give an
admirable Idea of the Death
of the Saints. There is sure-
ly First cause of admiration,
that so many persons of Pie-
ty, who continually read this
Work and approve of it,
should still nevertheless pas-
sionately love Life, and trem-
ble with fear when one speaks
to them of Death.

FAir day of Eternity, which
is not darkned by the
return of Night; Calm and
clear day, in which sparkle
all the lights of soverain
truth! Celestial City, Hap-
py

Lib. 3. c.

48.

and c/ 200.

py habitation of the Saints,
 Residence full of joy, Place
 of rest and of delights, the
 possession whereof is not
 troubled by any of those
 changes which overthrow
 the felicities of the Earth :
 When will this happy day
 shine for us ? When, O
 Lord, shall we see this dear
 Countrey ? And why do
 we not uncloath our selves
 even at this hour of every
 thing that hinders us from
 arriving there ? Alas ! the
 brightness of that day shines
 not yet to us but only afar
 off. We make our interview
 of it only through the thick
 darkness of our ignorance :
 Whilst the Citizens of that
 holy *Jerusalem* abandon
 themselves

*Imitation
 of Christ*

Lib. 1. c.

23.

Lib. 3. c. 49.

&c.

*Imitation
of Christ.*

themselves to the transports of their joy, and incessantly chant forth Canticles to the glory of the Most high, to the glory of his thrice holy Name; the Children of Eve, unfortunate Heys of her Chastisement, creep upon the Earth, and sigh at the length of their banishment.

Is that call'd a Living which we live here below? All our days are full of darkness, of bitterness, and of sorrow. Our Soul is there upon the rack through a continual fear of Sin. Our Heart is there disquieted by a thousand solitudes, dissipated by curiosity; transported by ambition, blinded by error, beaten down by labour,

labour, besieged by temptations, effeminated by delights, languishing in poverty, in Sickneses, and in all sorts of Calamities. O Man! acknowledge that if it is grievous unto thee to die, it ought to be yet more grievous unto thee to live.

*Imitatio.
of Christ.*

O the Strange stupidity of the human Heart amidst so many miseries! Man is to day, and to morrow he appears no more. Nevertheless he scarcely ever thinks of the uncertainty of his condition. Senseless that he is, he makes projects for many years, as if he were assured to live a long time, he who hath not one sole day certain. How many men

*Imitatio.
of Christ.*

men have we seen whom Death hath surpriz'd in the height of their great enterprises ? How often have you heard say, of them who were seen yesterday so flourishing : One of them was murdered, the other was drown'd, another died in playing ; and he who seem'd to have most health, expir'd sitting at table ? One should never have done, if one should run over all the manners of Death, where with dayly and dismall examples strike our eyes ; and yet what profit do we make thereof ? He surely is wise and happy, who passes on his Life, without adhering to it ; who sees all it's me-
ments

ments slide away, as if each of them were to be the last; and who prepares himself at the beginning of each day with the same care which he would take upon the day of his Death! One acquires this happy foresight by the contempt of the World, by the desire of advancing in Virtue, by a sincere repentance, by a blind obedience to the orders of Providence, by an uncloathing and despising of ones self, accompanied with a firm resolution to suffer all for Christ Jesus. Let us say to him with St. Paul; *Lord, I am as a Vessel which hath already the aspersions to be sacrificed: the time*

*Imitation
of Christ.*

2 Tim. 4

Imitatio.
of Christ.

Ibid.

time of my departure draw
near, I have finished my course
and no more now remains for
me, but to expect the crown
of Justice which is reserved
for them who have fought va-
liantly. Behold the state in
which a true Christian
should be settled; for he who
hath not fought according to
the Law, shall not be crowned.
Wherefore, make your pro-
fit of the strength which God
hath given you: and whilst
you are in health, lay
up a treasure of good works
for the other Life. Per-
haps you will not be any
longer in the state of per-
forming them, when you
shall fall into sickness and
infirmity. You are not sure.

ly

ly so great a fool as to fancy you shall always enjoy health. Alas ! how the sentiments of man change in the bed of Death : All that he esteemed great in the World, appear then to him little and despicable : the sin which seem'd to him small and inconsiderable becomes great and monstrous. But the change of his reason serves him no more but to plunge him in Despair.

*Imitatio.
of Christ.*

Learn this sacred doctrine from the mouth of Christ Jesus : *He who loves his Soul* Lib. 3. c. 49. *shall lose it ?* Do not imitate those self-lovers of whom the Apostle St. Paul speaks with execration. For nothing

Job. 12. 15.

Tim. 3.

thing is worthy of your love
Imitatio. but God alone ; no, not e-
of Christ ven your own Soul, which
2 Pet. 3. is the most perfect image
Jud. 10. 8. of the Divinity : *If you love*
Mat. 16. it, *you shall lose it ; and if you*
26. lose your Soul, what will it a-
*Mark. 8.*vail you to have gained the
 whole World ? For having once
 lost your Soul, by what exchange
 can you recover it ? But we
 shall never comprehend this
 truth, unless the love of Je-
 sus serves us for our Ma-
 ster. O love of my God,
 when wilt thou clear my
 spirit ? When wilt thou set
 my Heart on fire ? When
 shall I enjoy thy delights ?
 When shall I contemplate
 the glory of thy Kingdom ?
 Comfort me in my Banish-
 ment.

ment. Sweeten my Affliction. I sigh after nothing but to be with you, my beloved Lord, for all the comfort the World offers me, doth but augment my impatience and my sorrow. When I have a will to raise up my self towards Heaven, my Passions draw me towards the Earth. Tottering between two so opposit motions, I am a burden to my self, and I desire ardently to die; that so there may be an end of all these combats which put me in perpetual danger to be overcome by the Enemy of my Salvation. If I had still any affection for the World, I would entreat you to leave
me

*Imitatio.
of Christ.*

Imitatio. me in it : but since I have
of Christ. settled all my affections upon
 you, what is there that
 should stay me upon Earth?

If God doth you the fa-
 vour to afford you these
 feelings, do not attribute
Rom. 12. them to your self : I exhort
 you not to elevate your selves
 beyond that which you ought, in
 the sentiments you have of
 your selves ; but to contain
 your selves within the li-
 mits of moderation, accord-
 ing to the measure of the gift
 of Faith which God hath im-
Jer. 13. parted to each one of you. 'Tis
 to me alone to whom glory ap-
 pertains, says our Lord. Do
 not glorify your selves, because
 I have spoken unto you. Give
 to me the glory of all, before
 darkness

Darkness surprizes you. By this means you will profit more and more in Virtue, and I will give you a taste of all the sweetnesses of a holy Death.

Article XXXXI.

The admirable Prayſes which St. Laurence Justinian gives to Death: from whence he concludes, that 'tis no wonder if the most perfect among Christians are they who most desire it.

WE need not mervail that the Faithful who are penetrated with the Love of Christ Jesus, desire to

*Imitatio
of Christ.*

*De incen-
dijs Divi-
ni amoris.*

*S. LAM-
TENCE.*

to die ; since he hath rendered Death desirable by dying for us. In effect, 'tis no longer a punishment, 'tis a favour, and a favour by so much the greater, by how much the sooner obtained. For that which was a chastisement of Sin, is now a temporal recompense of good Works. We ought therefore to look now upon it as the object of our sweetest hopes, and not as the subject of our Fears. O Death ! thou art no longer bitter, thou art no longer cruel to the Disciples of Christ Jesus, as thou wert formerly to the Children of *Adam*. Let us bless our Lord, for having made the most
terrible

terrible of all Evils, to be
so wholesome and so uni-
versal a remedy, which
frees us from all sorts of in-
firmities and miseries ;
which exempts us from the
misfortunes of poverty, from
the outrages of our enemies,
from the attacks of envy,
from the disquiets of avarice
and of ambition ; in a word,
from the tyranny of all our
passions: & (which is yet more
desirable) which exempts us
from Sin. Death having thus
changed its nature, Christians
have no longer any aversion a-
gainst it ; but on the con-
trary, they desire it as much
as other men dread it : and
they invite to their assistance
that which the World avoyds

S. LAM-
rence,

S. Lawrence.

as the cause of its destruction.

Now altho' all true Christians have these thoughts, we must nevertheless acknowledge that the Saints are infinitely more pierced therewith. As they have more love for Christ Jesus, they have also a greater desire for Death. The ardour of this Love gives them such an absolute contempt of Life, and such an impatience to get out of it, that there is not a moment in which they wish not the separation of their Soul from their Body. Nothing more nearly touches than these Words of David, when having his Heart transfixed with the darts of Divine Love, and as it were transported

transported out of himself by
 a happy and holy fury ; he S. Lawrence.
 exclaims : *My Soul languishes* Psal. 83. 2.
and is consumed with a desire to
enter into the house of our Lord.
My Heart burns with an ardent
thirst to enjoy God, the living
God ; and my Body is dried up
in this desire. Happy they who
placing in you all their confidence,
have no other thought but to ad-
vance themselves towards you,
O Lord : for one sole day in
your House, is more worth than
a Thousand any where else. I
had rather be the last, and upon
the step of the door in the House
of my God, than dwell in the
tents of the Wicked. In effect,
it seems that a Soul enflamed
with the desire of seeing her
God, unties her self from
 P 2 her

S. Lau-
rence.

Psal. 21.

her Body by continual Ex-
tacies ; and, to make use of
Dauids expression, *Melts away*
in these transports, as Wax
melts with the heat of the Sun.

They who are arriv'd at so
high a degree of perfection
which renders them equal
to Angels, forget oftentimes
to take such nourishment as
is necessary for their Body,
because they are devoured
by a Hunger much more
pressing than that which is
satisfied by food. The Spi-
ritual aliment which fills
them, takes from them all
gust of corporal sustenance ;
and the flames of Charity do
so stifle in them the flames
of concupiscence, that they
become insensible, both as
to

to the necessities of the Body; and as to the pleasures of the Earth. O Lord, said a great Saint, Why do we preserve with so much precaution a miserable Life? Should we not laugh at a Prisoner who should spend all his time in raving up the walls of his Prison? Yet, this is that which men do, when they pamper their Bodies. Since we must die to see you, O God, and since no one can entirely possess you but by losing his Life; I accept the condition even from this hour. Do that to day which you will do one day. Behold I am ready to follow you, and I demand of you this chief favour,

STeresa. YOURS That I may see you to
the end I may die, and that I
S. Aug. may die to the end I may see you
eternally.

Article XXXII.

It may perhaps seem strange
that we should place the
thoughts of St. Teresa in a
collection of those of the Fa-
thers. But the Writings of
this great Saint are replem-
ish'd with so sublime a piety,
that one may compare them
in this point to the most
beautious Works which the
Spirit of God ever dictated
to men. Wherefore we con-
ceiv'd that it might not only
be permitted, but that it
would.

would prove profitable to in-
sert here some of the *admira- S. Teresa*
ble Sentiments she hath
left us upon the meditation of
Eternity, and upon the de-
sire of Death.

O Jesu, soverainly amiable,
sole object of my affe- *A pious*
ctions, shall I always lan- *exclamati-*
guish with the impatient *on after*
desire of seeing you? What *Commun-*
solace will you give to a Soul, *nion*
which nothing upon Earth
comforts, and which can
take no rest but in you alone?
O that this banishment is
long? O that Life is irksom
to one who burns with the
desire of possessing you! *I*
die because I cannot die. You
know it, O my God, you
P. 4. who

S. Teresa who died for the love of me,
know whether it is to live
when one long expects what
one loves !

No, my Life is not a Life,
'tis a continual torment, 'tis
a fire which devours, 'tis a
punishment which would
be as terrible as those of
Hell, if one had lost the
Hope of seeing an end of it.
O Life, thou enemy of my
happiness, Life more cruel
a thousand times than Death !
why is it not permitted me
in this moment to break the
chains wherewith thou keep-
est me in captivity. But I
preserve thee because my
God protects thee. I have
a care of thee, because thou
belongest to him. Do not
then

then any longer abuse his bounty nor my obedience, and cease at last to oppose thy self to the impatience of my affection.

O desirable Death, and too long expected ! O Sanctuary, inaccessible to all the tempests of the World, happy end of our miseries, destruction of Sin, beginning of our true Life, make haste to deliver me from the Death of the World. O let me die, to the end I may not die. 'Tis the Death of Sin which I dread. 'Tis the Life of Grace which I desire. But this dread and this desire consume me in such sort, that I do not live, and yet I cannot die. My Life is all

S. Teresa out of me, because all my Hope is in Christ Jesus, who hath promis'd unto me a better Life.

Cant. 2. Alas ! It is very true ,
That Love is more dreadfull
then Death. O Love of Jesus,
 how piercing are your darts ?
 how stinging are your
 wounds ? The rudest blows
 of Death are endured with
 less difficulty than yours.
 There is too much of it, O
 Lord, there's too much ;
Cant. 6. *Turn a little aside your looks,*
for I want strength to support
them. Eyther burn me no
 longer , or make an end to
 reduce me into ashes. How
 will you have my Soul to
 divide herself between that
 which you demand of her,
 and

and that which my Bodie
requires of her?

S. Teresa

Be gon from me, O all
you Earthly Consolations ;
a Heart wounded with the
Love of Jesus, cannot becu-
red but by Jesus. All hu-
man Remedies are too weak
to assuage a Divine Sick-
ness. 'Tis you my Saviour,
who cure and who wound
when you please. O Faithful
Bridegroom of the Faithfull
Soul, with what bounty ,
what sweetness , what plea-
sure , what ravishments ,
what testimonies of tender-
ness , do you heal the hurts
which your Love hath made
in us.

O my Soul, let us expect
yet a little, and he will take
compassion

S. Teresa

compassion on our languishing condition. His impatience is no less than ours; we sometimes believe him to be far off, when he is very near at hand. Behold him descending from the mountains, and traversing the hills, he runs, he flies to draw near unto us, he knocks at the dore, he calls us. Enter, Lord, I slept, but my heart watched: Alas! I was ready to follow you, and you have stol'n your self from me. I seek you, and I find you no more. I call you, and you do not answer.

What have we done, my Soul, who hath driven away your Bridegroom? Is it not that our impatience displeases

displeases him? Is it not that
 we love him overmuch, or *S. Teresa*
 that we love him not enough?
 For *he is a Fealous God*, who *Exod. 34.*
 will be loved more than all
 things, and will have us love
 nothing but himself. Per-
 haps he will surprize us. *His*
day comes when it is least thought *Thes. 2.2.*
on, as the Thief who comes in
the night. Let us expect with
 humility that dreadfull day.
 If Jesus loves us, he will not
 slack his coming; if he doth
 not love us, he will come but
 too soon for us.

The

S. Aug.

The Conclusion
of all this Collection.

As at the beginning of this Treatise we drew from St. Augustin Principles to establish this Proposition ; That perfect Souls desire Death and receive it with Joy ; we thought fit to finish this Collection with a discourse wherein the same holy Doctour shews, That all people by their proper Interest ought to desire to depart out of the World.

Lib. 22. de
Civ. c. 30.

You complain that Truth is trampled on by the tricks of Lying and Falshood. You say, O Christians, that they

they who make profession to be the Masters or the Disci- *S. Aug.*
 ples of Truth, do basely aban- *Ser. 64. de*
 don it, and that its beauty *Verbis Do-*
 which is altogether Divine *mini.*
 cannot fix the inconstancy of
 its Lovers. Why then do you
 not aspire to Heaven, where *Ser. 6. in-*
 Truth glittering with all its *ter Com-*
 beams triumphs over falshood *munes.*
 and malice, and frees them
 who love it, from all injustice *In Psalm.*
 and violence? *passim.*

You declame against the ini-
 quity of men, who neither re-
 gard desert nor virtue, who
 bestow Offices upon birth or
 favour, and who sleight the
 good people without confer-
 ing on them any dignity or
 giving them any reward.
 Why then do you not aspire
 after

S. Aug.

after the glory of the Blessed in Heaven, where happiness corresponds to the pains they have indured, where Crowns are proportioned to the Combats they have fought, and finally where rewards follow the good Works they have performed, and where the most holy are most honoured?

Kings cannot exercise their magnificence and their Liberalitie, which are their most shining virtues, without being very often deceived by outward appearances. As they know not the true spirit of their Subjects, they cannot discern their true deserts. They frequently favour Vice, when they intend to render Justice to Virtue. But the God whom

whom we adore, cannot be deceived. He reads in the Heart of them who serve him: He discerns all our actions; and as he beholds all the motions of our Will, he also lets not impietie pass without punishment, nor Virtue without reward.

You complain of the hardness of your condition, you murmur for that you must always fight, you grieve to be incessantly encompassed with enemies, you bear them about you, you nourish them within your selves, and you are the theater of this intestine War, where the Flesh is continually at strife with the spirit. On which ever side the victory falls, you cannot rejoyce, without

S. Aug.

S. Aug.

without being afflicted at the same time for some loss. Leave then this wretched dwelling, where Life is a continual temptation and a perpetual combat. Desire Death, which will be the end of all these miseries. Sigh after that agreeable habitation, where the Saints enjoy a perfect victory, and a peace without molestation. Do not any longer complain that in despite of all the care you take to bring one part of your self to agree with the other part, yet their differences are dayly renewed : Or if you will complain, let this your complaint serve at least to make you march more speedily towards that place of peace, where you shall agree.

gree with your self, and be in
a perpetual repose.

S. Aug.

Finally, you love Life, but
you would not have it to be
made up of miseries and of
sorrows. Shall God make Life
for you after another manner
than it was for his own Son?
To come to that Life which
you demand, you must be gon
out of this. Christ Jesus him-
self hath shew'd us that we
must acquire it at that rate.
Why seek you not that dwel-
ling, where the Life which
you desire hath his habitati-
on? From the first moment in
which you shall possess Hea-
ven, you will no longer fear
either poverty, or misery, or
disease, or death. Why then
do you not that, for the enjoy-
ment.

S. Aug. ment of so happy a Life, which you do for the prolonging of this other unfortunate Life? You abstain from Meats and from Divertisements which are hurtfull to your health. Why do you not as much for that Life which will never be troubled with any sicknesses? And yet the sollicitudes you have to preserve your Body, will not warrant it from Death. All that you can pretend to, is to die a little later. Ah! my dear Brethren, can it be possible that you should do less to live eternally? No I cannot believe it; and you will testifie without doubt by your actions, by your sufferings, and by the *Holy Desires of Death*, that you have a Faith and

and Hope for another Life.

S. Aug. 2

What would you give to be exempt from all incommo-
dities, and to be assured to live
always? Is it not true, that all
whatever you possess, would
not suffice to purchase so
great a good, altho' you were
Lord even of the whole Uni-
verse? Yet this so great and
excellent a good is to be sold:
You may buy it, if you will:
the price ought not to affright
you: it will not exceed your a-
bilities: you shall pay no more
for it then what you are able
to give: you may purchase it
by an Alms; you may acquire
it by some other good Works;
you may deserve it by a good
desire; finally you may obtain
it by a penitential Life, and by

a

S. Aug.

a holy Death. Do not then despise a happiness which depends only on the will to possess it. And if you have any spark of zeal left in you to promote your true Interest and to procure your own Salvation ; seek a dwelling where Truth is victorious, where Sanctity is honoured, where Peace is immutable, & where Life and Felicity are Eternal.

Approbation.

Approbation.

Since the Death of the *Just*
 gives us the liberty to render
 to their memory what we ow them;
 we may say that the Reverend Fa-
 ther Lalemant, Prior of St.
 Genovefe, and Chancellour of
 the University of Paris, ha-
 ving studied and endeavoured by
 the meditation and the practise
 of such Truths as the Spirit of God
 inspired into the greatest men of
 the Church, to make Death fami-
 liar unto him: this Collection of
 the most pithy thoughts which the
 holy Fathers had concerning
 Death, is one of the most conside-
 rable Monuments which remains
 to us of his sublime virtue. It were
 to be wished that every one would
 follow

follow the example of this great person in reading his Works, and that they would learn to die Christianly, by seeing how he prepared himself thereto. The esteem which people most elevated by their condition and their deserts had of his Piety, and his extraordinary Qualities, did not at all lessen the contempt he had of Life, and the desire of Death, which always appeared in him, according to the example of the Apostle. Thus his memory shall be evermore in veneration to all them who will read this excellent Work. 'Tis the judgment which I gave at Sorbon: the first of March, 1673.

Signed, Colbert.

FOR ANS.